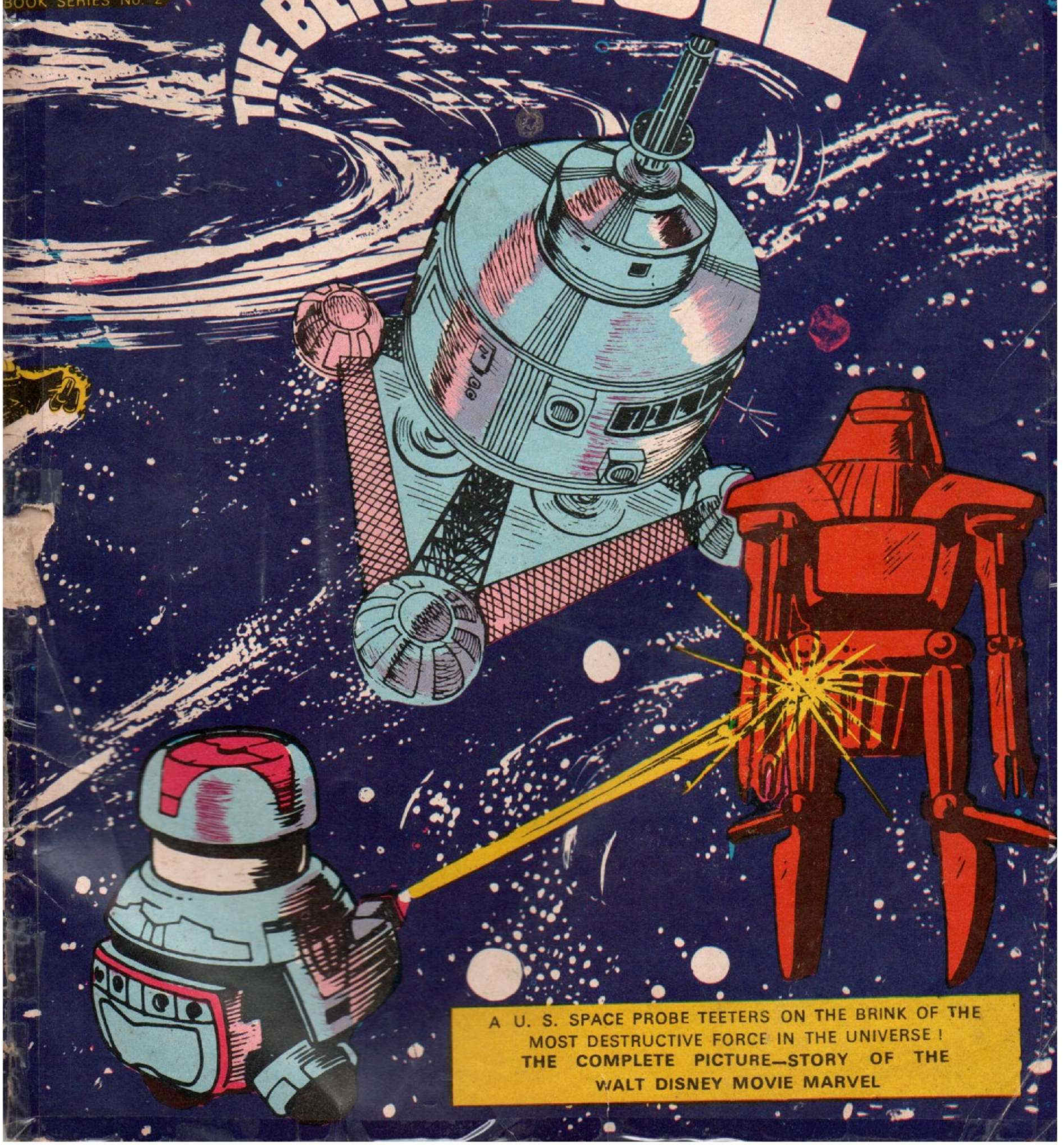
CHANDAMAMA
BOOK
SHELF
BOOK SERIES No. 2
Rs 4.50

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS'

THE BLACK HOLE



A U. S. SPACE PROBE TEETERS ON THE BRINK OF THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE !

THE COMPLETE PICTURE—STORY OF THE WALT DISNEY MOVIE MARVEL

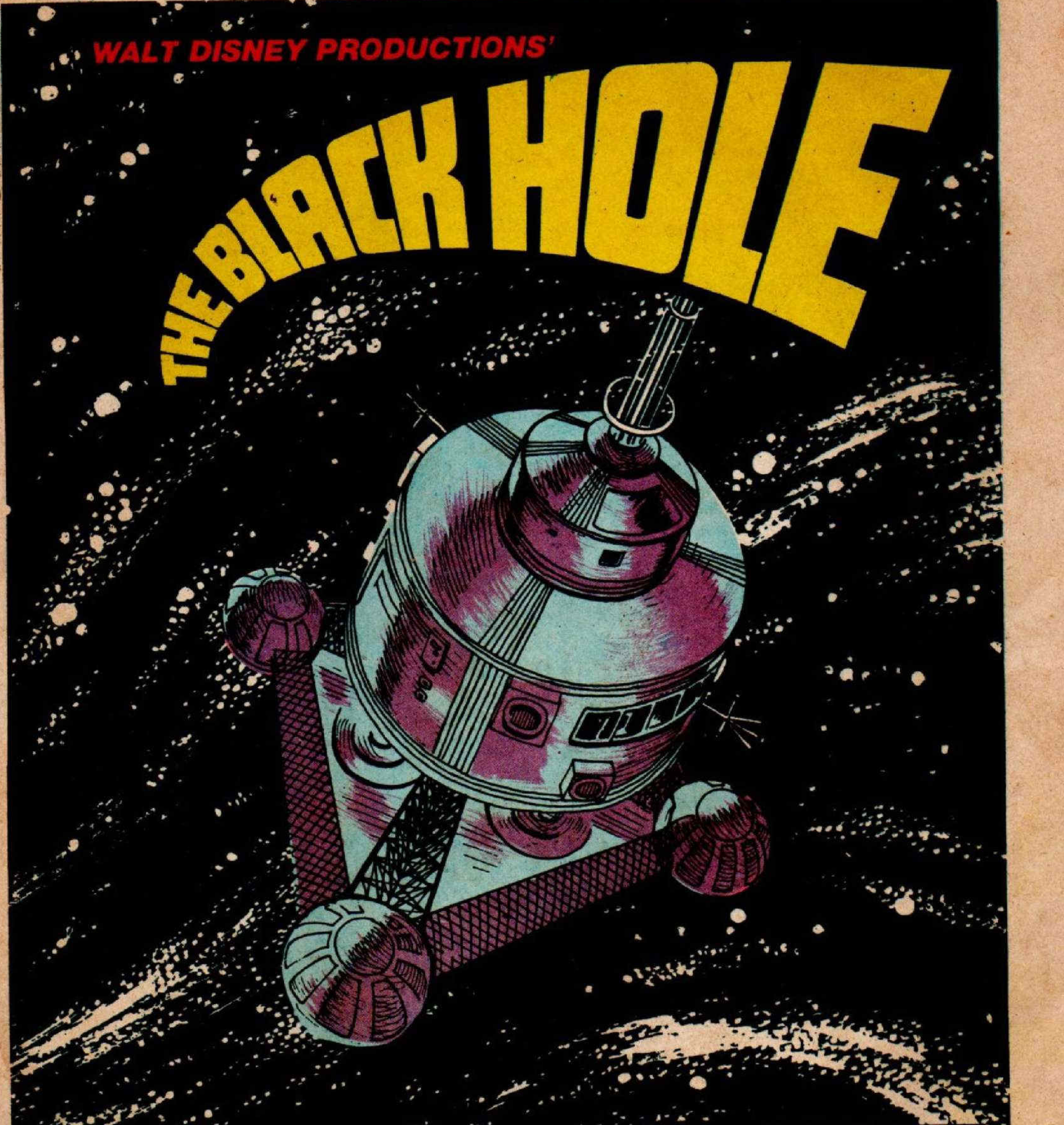
THE BLACK HOLE

Palomino was in space on a fact-finding mission. The aim of its crew was to look for evidence of new life over there. Five years of their cruise had produced no result.

Disappointed, they were about to abandon their deep space expedition when a giant collapsar – the large black hole ever seen – was revealed to them. And imagine their surprise when they saw the long-lost legendary star ship Cygnus, floating dangerously close to it.

Cygnus wasn't, as one would have imagined, a dismantled vessel. Reinhardt, its creator and commander, who was the spirit behind its historic journey, was still alive. He had a band of mechanical slaves to assist, but had no desire to be freed from the evil plight.

It seemed as if he had a tryst with the wicked forces of the collapsar – and he wished to take the Palomino's crew also along on his ill-fated enterprise.


WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS'
THE BLACK HOLE
MAN'S LONG SEARCH FOR LIFE IN THE LAST UNCHARTED AREA OF THIS GALAXY IS DRAWING TO A CLOSE AS THE U.S.S. PALOMINO, A DEEP-SPACE EXPLORER CRAFT, SETS ITS COURSE FOR HOME. THIS EXPEDITION, AFTER EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF THE MOST EXTENSIVE EXPLORATION, HAS NETTED, AS HAVE ALL PAST SEARCHES, NOTHING.

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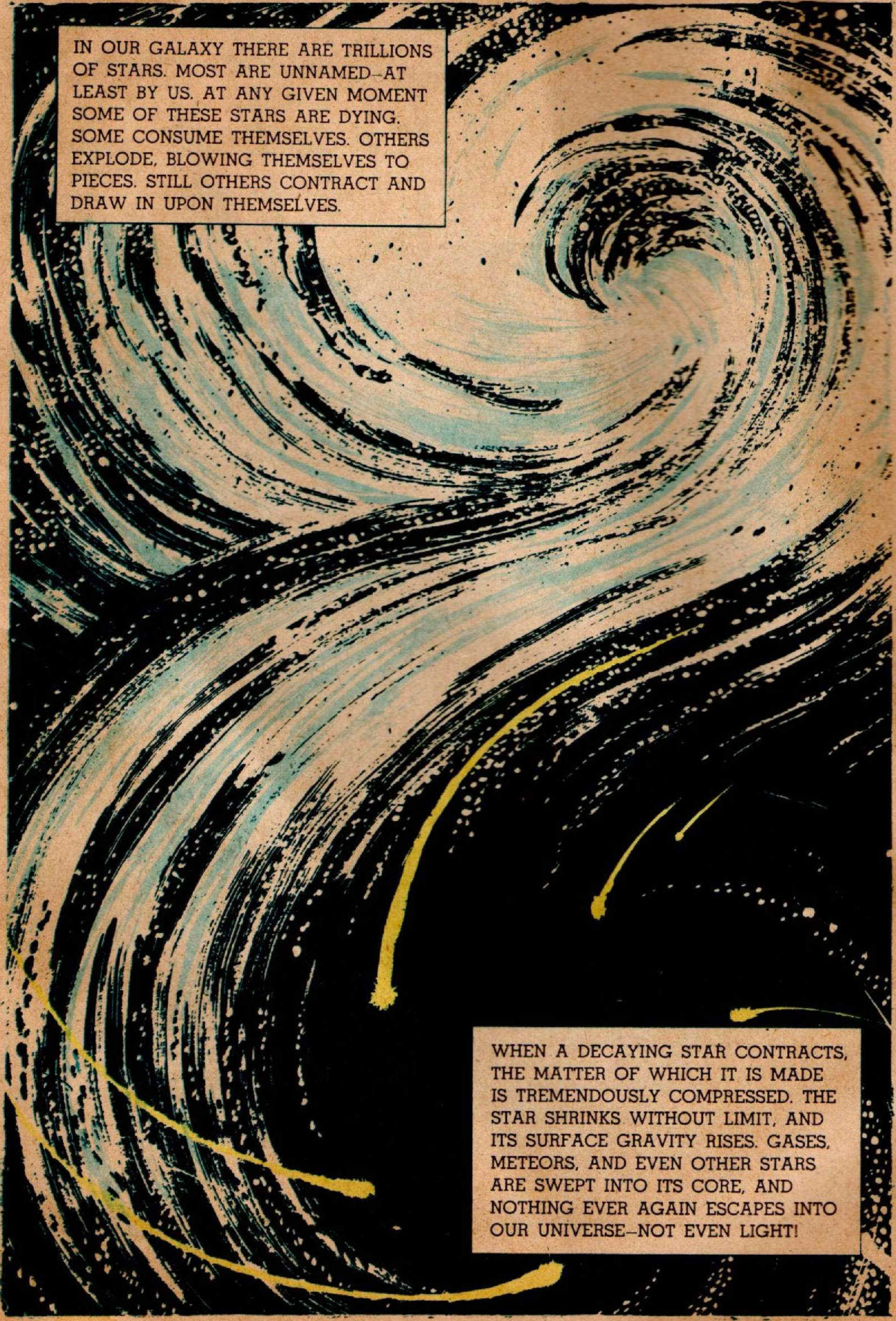
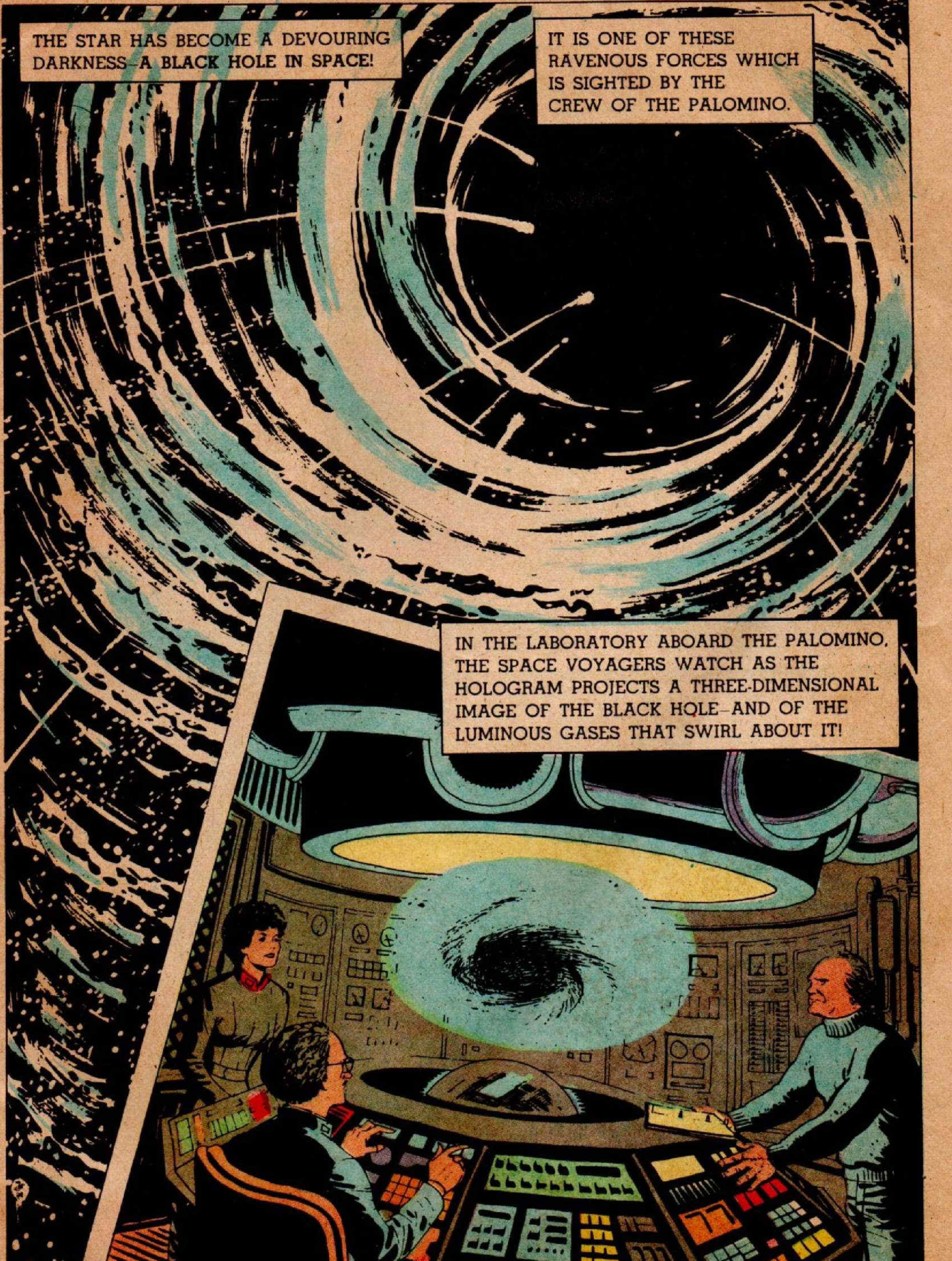
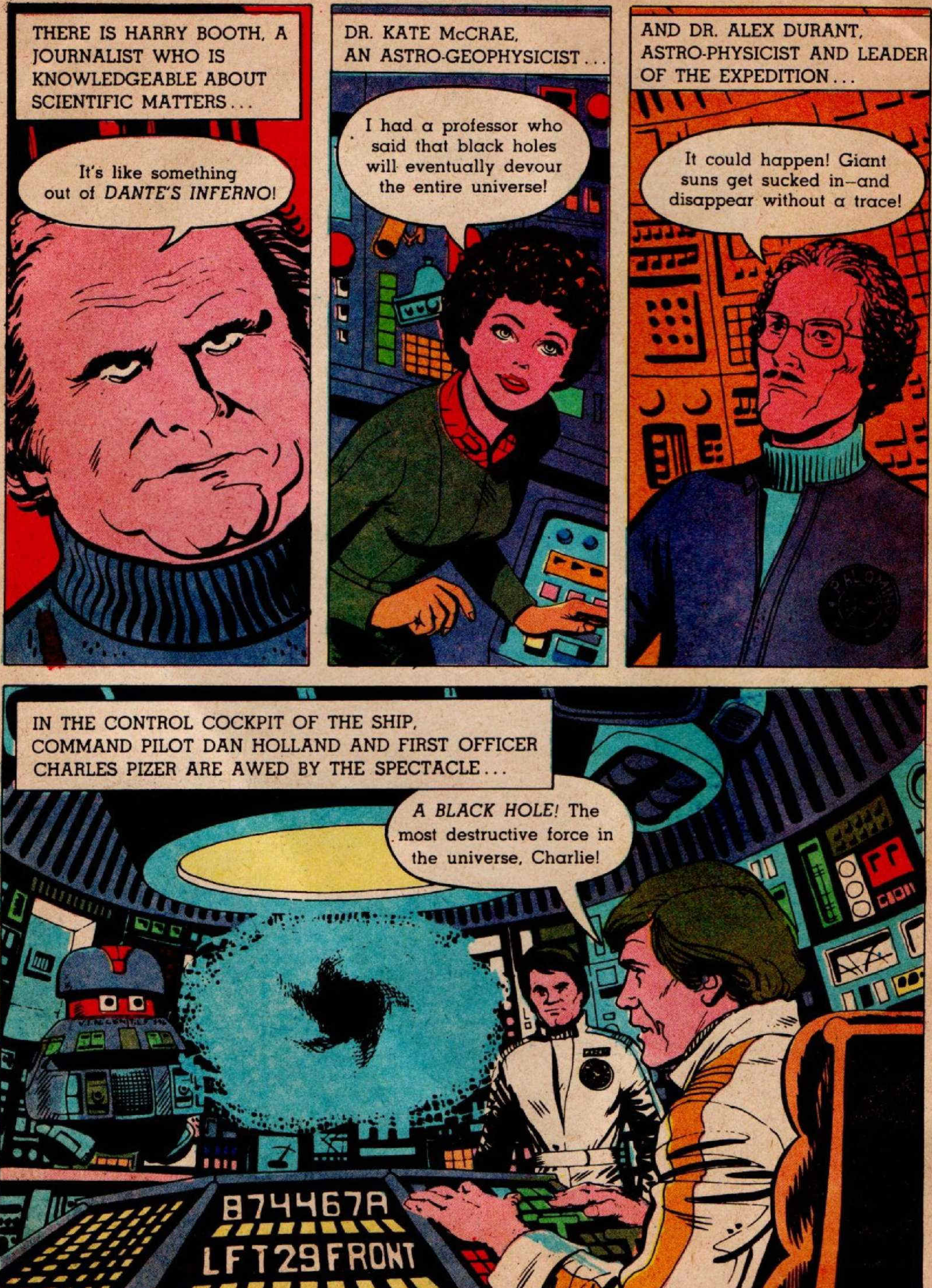
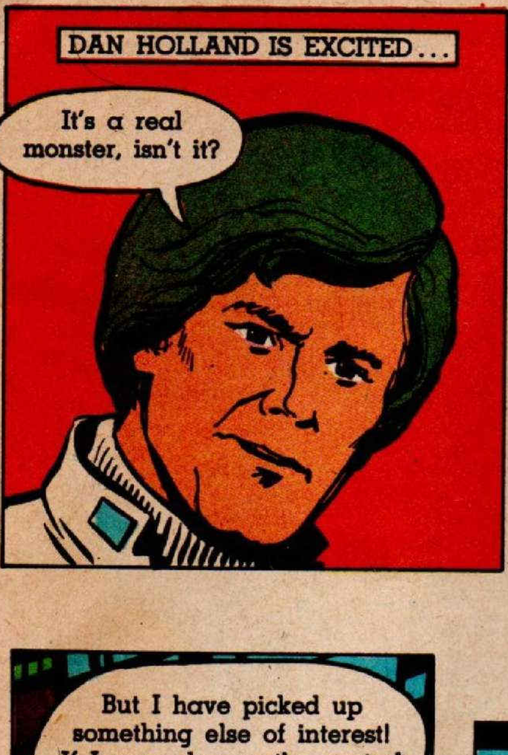


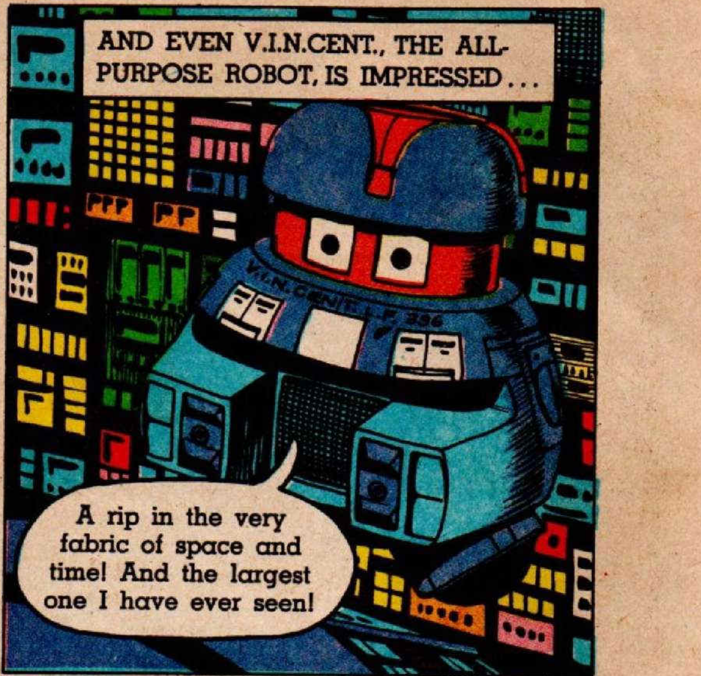
IN OUR GALAXY THERE ARE TRILLIONS OF STARS. MOST ARE UNNAMED—AT LEAST BY US. AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT SOME OF THESE STARS ARE DYING. SOME CONSUME THEMSELVES. OTHERS EXPLODE, BLOWING THEMSELVES TO PIECES. STILL OTHERS CONTRACT AND DRAW IN UPON THEMSELVES.

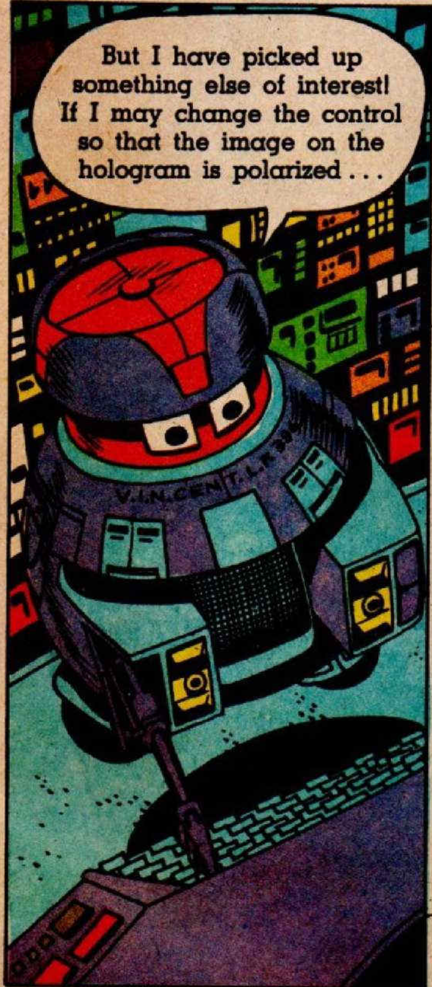
WHEN A DECAYING STAR CONTRACTS, THE MATTER OF WHICH IT IS MADE IS TREMENDOUSLY COMPRESSED. THE STAR SHRINKS WITHOUT LIMIT, AND ITS SURFACE GRAVITY RISES. GASES, METEORS, AND EVEN OTHER STARS ARE SWEPT INTO ITS CORE, AND NOTHING EVER AGAIN ESCAPES INTO OUR UNIVERSE—NOT EVEN LIGHT!

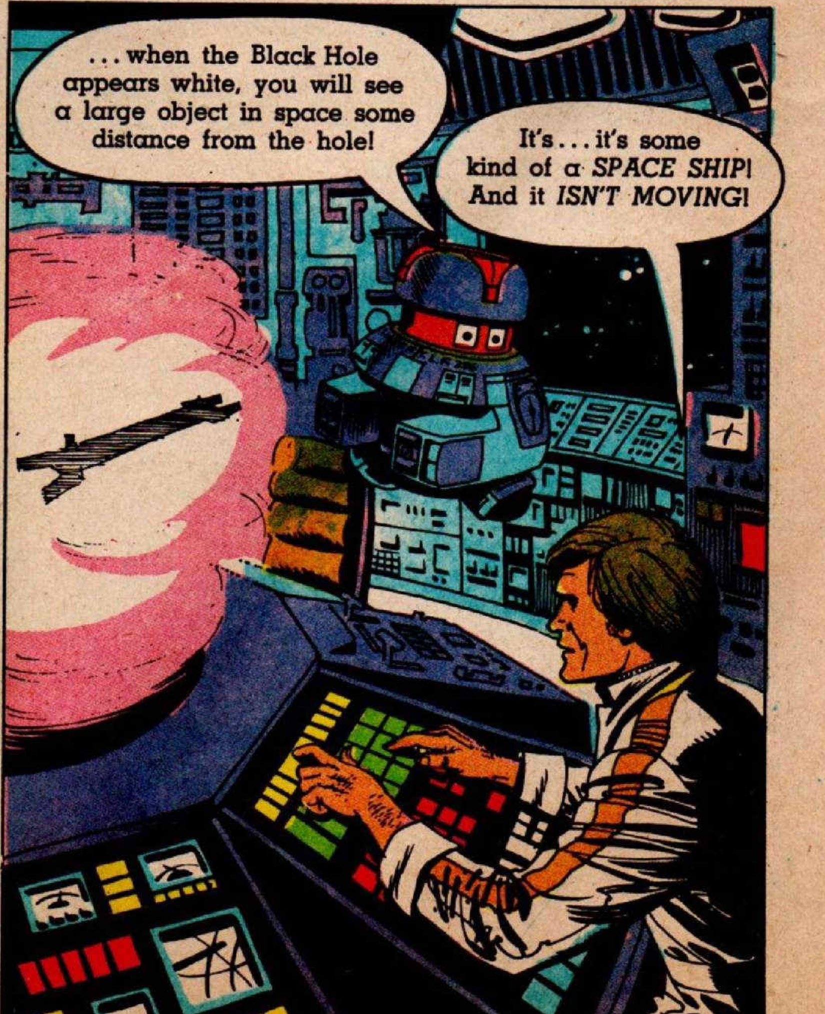

THE STAR HAS BECOME A DEVOURING DARKNESS—A BLACK HOLE IN SPACE!
IT IS ONE OF THESE RAVENOUS FORCES WHICH IS SIGHTED BY THE CREW OF THE PALOMINO.
IN THE LABORATORY ABOARD THE PALOMINO, THE SPACE VOYAGERS WATCH AS THE HOLOGRAM PROJECTS A THREE-DIMENSIONAL IMAGE OF THE BLACK HOLE—AND OF THE LUMINOUS GASES THAT SWIRL ABOUT IT!

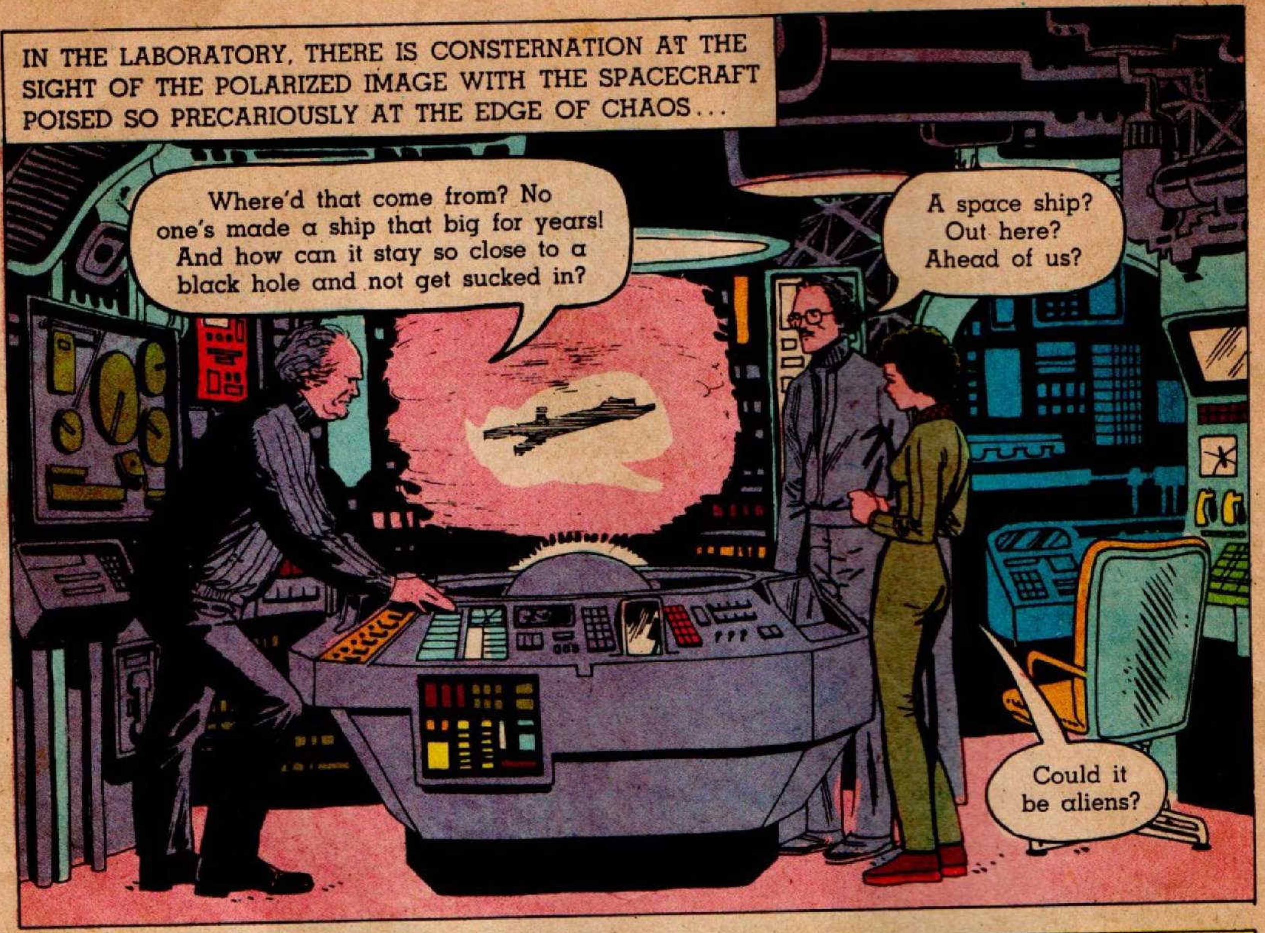

THERE IS HARRY BOOTH, A JOURNALIST WHO IS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT SCIENTIFIC MATTERS...
It's like something out of *DANTE'S INFERNO*!
DR. KATE McCRAE, AN ASTRO-GEOPHYSICIST...
I had a professor who said that black holes will eventually devour the entire universe!
AND DR. ALEX DURANT, ASTRO-PHYSICIST AND LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION...
It could happen! Giant suns get sucked in—and disappear without a trace!
IN THE CONTROL COCKPIT OF THE SHIP, COMMAND PILOT DAN HOLLAND AND FIRST OFFICER CHARLES PIZER ARE AWED BY THE SPECTACLE...
A BLACK HOLE! The most destructive force in the universe, Charlie!
874467A
LFT29FRONT
CHKE THRUSTER

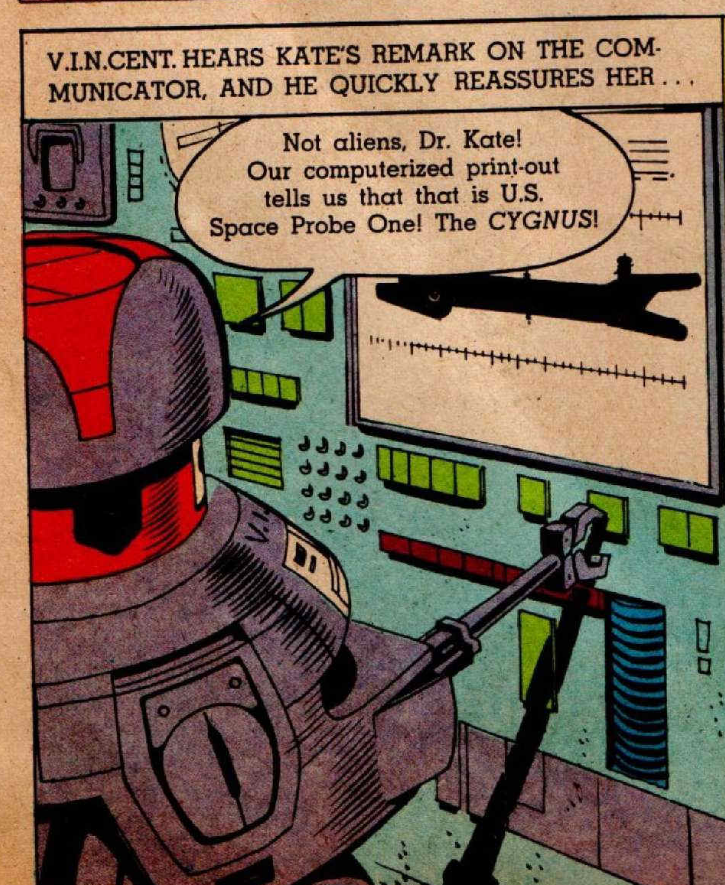

DAN HOLLAND IS EXCITED . . .
It's a real monster, isn't it?

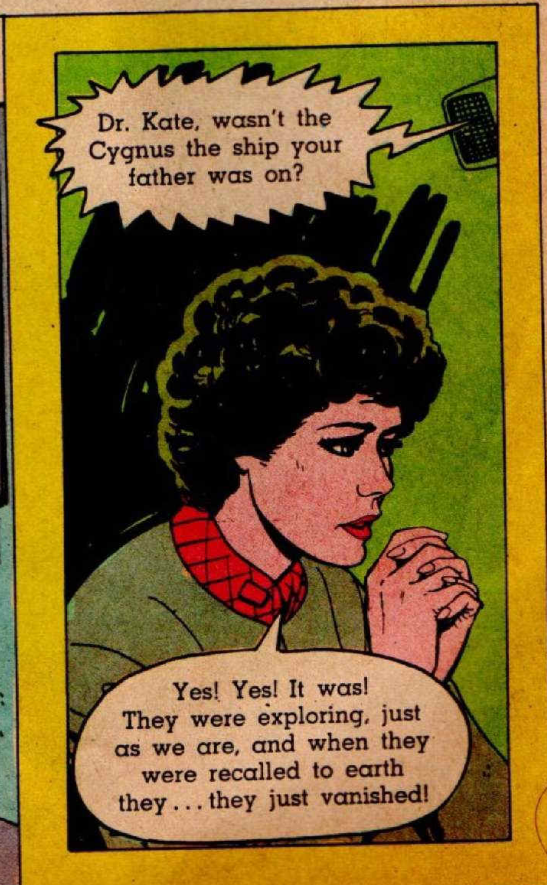

AND EVEN V.I.N.CENT., THE ALL-PURPOSE ROBOT, IS IMPRESSED . . .
A rip in the very fabric of space and time! And the largest one I have ever seen!

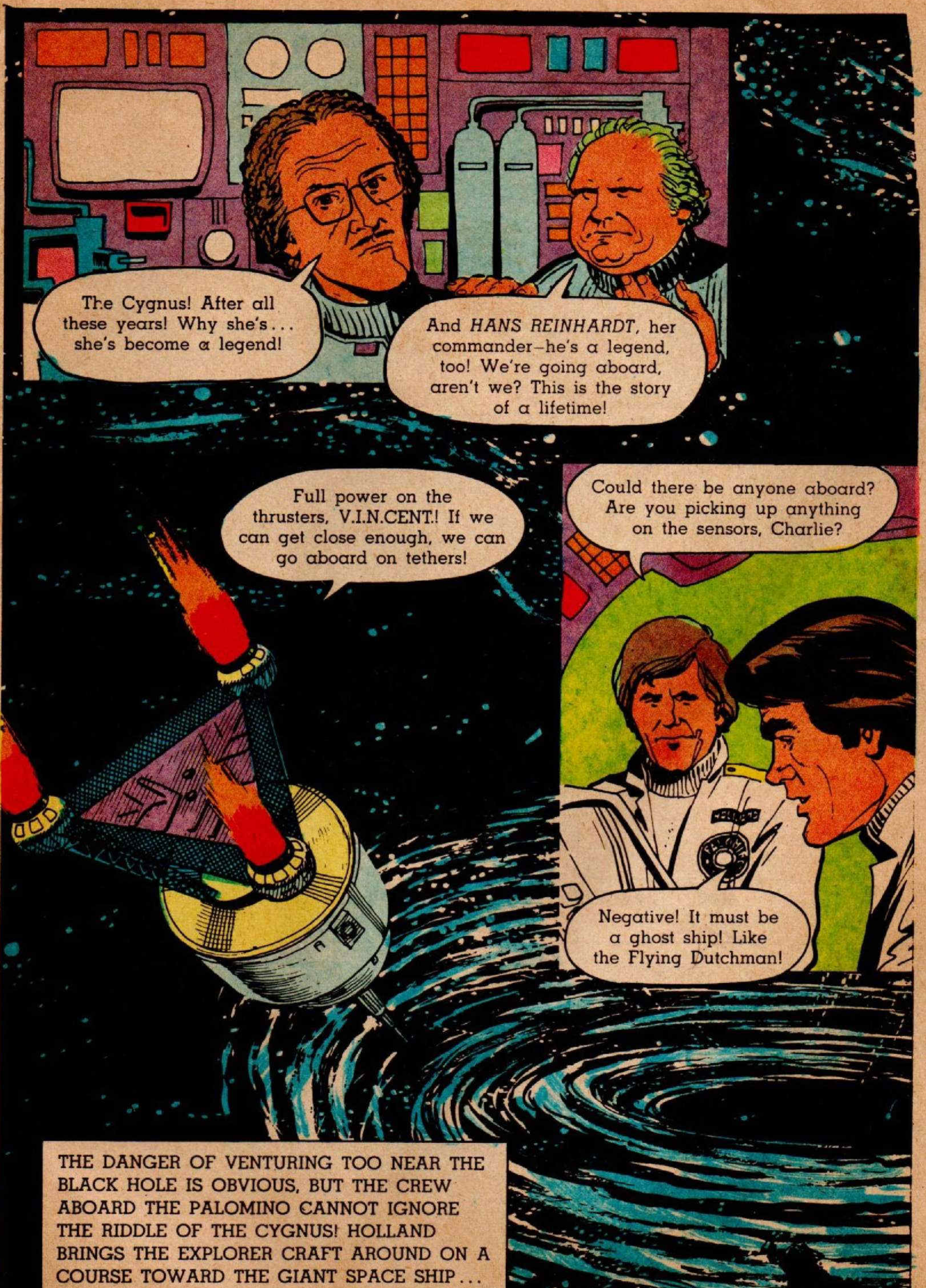

But I have picked up something else of interest! If I may change the control so that the image on the hologram is polarized . . .

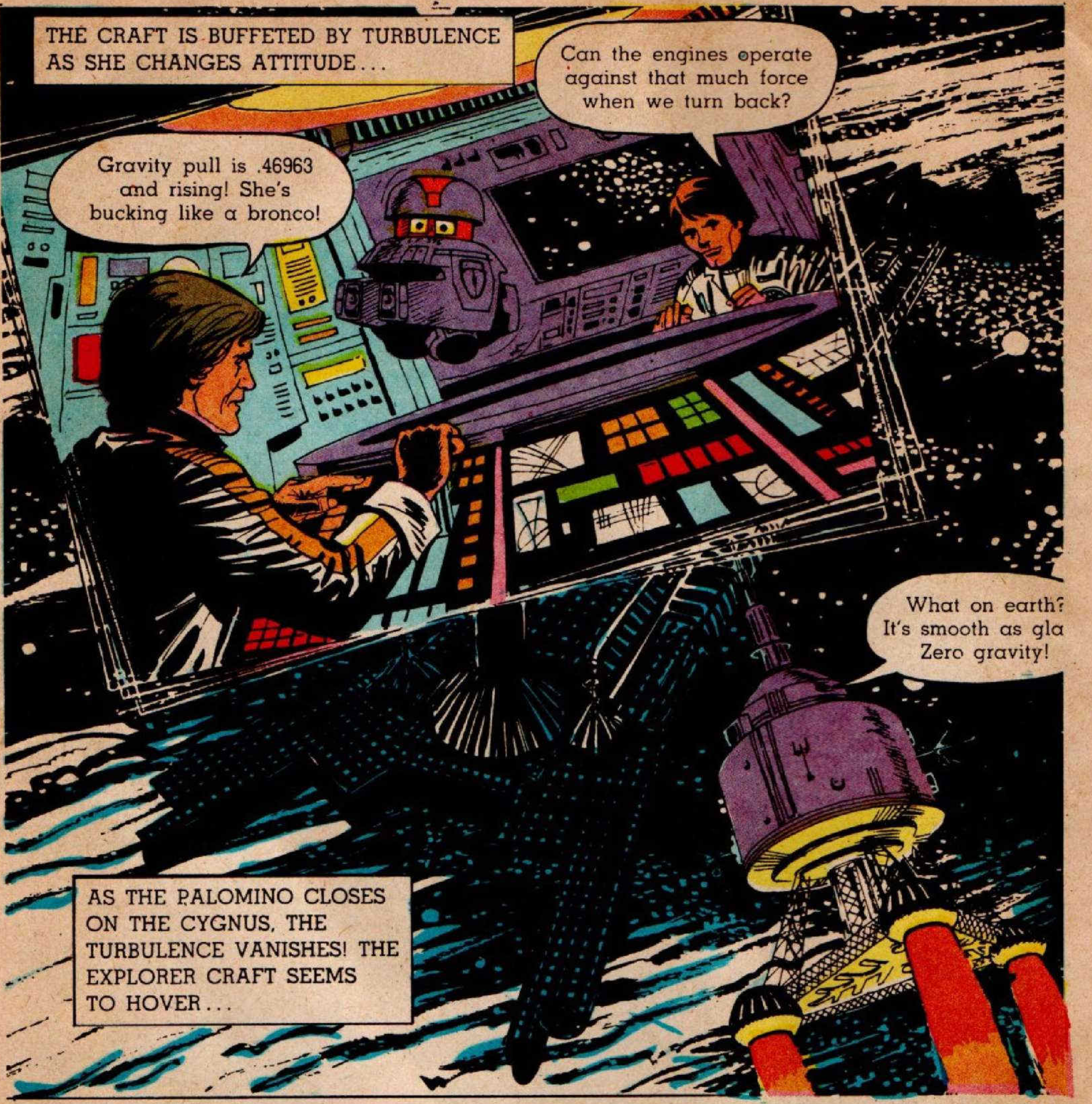

. . . when the Black Hole appears white, you will see a large object in space some distance from the hole!
It's . . . it's some kind of a *SPACE SHIP*! And it *ISN'T MOVING*!

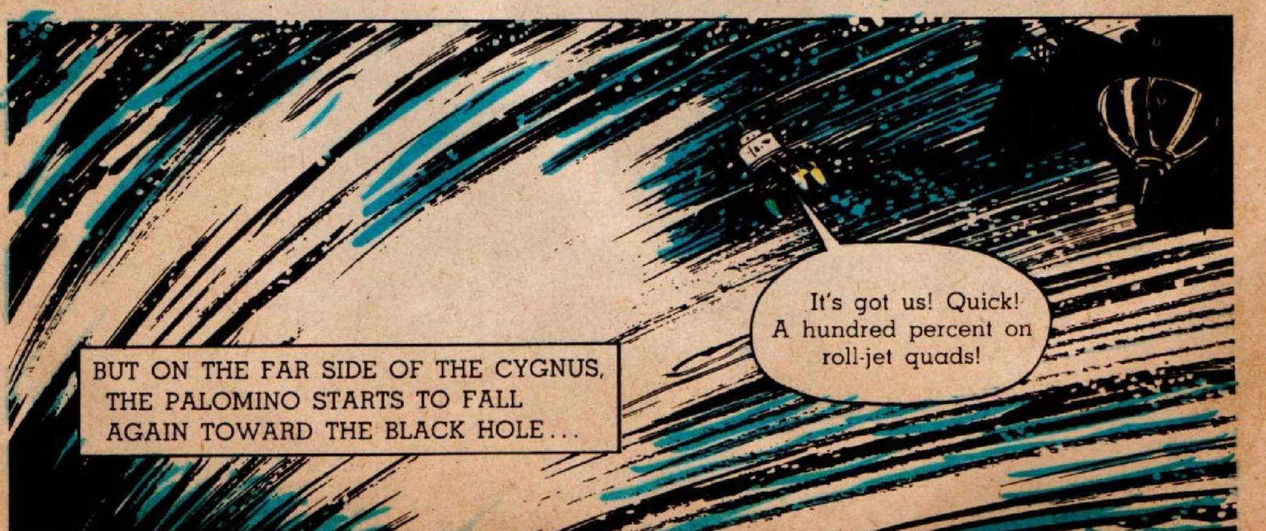

IN THE LABORATORY, THERE IS CONSTERNATION AT THE SIGHT OF THE POLARIZED IMAGE WITH THE SPACECRAFT POISED SO PRECARIOUSLY AT THE EDGE OF CHAOS...
Where'd that come from? No one's made a ship that big for years! And how can it stay so close to a black hole and not get sucked in?
A space ship? Out here? Ahead of us?
Could it be aliens?

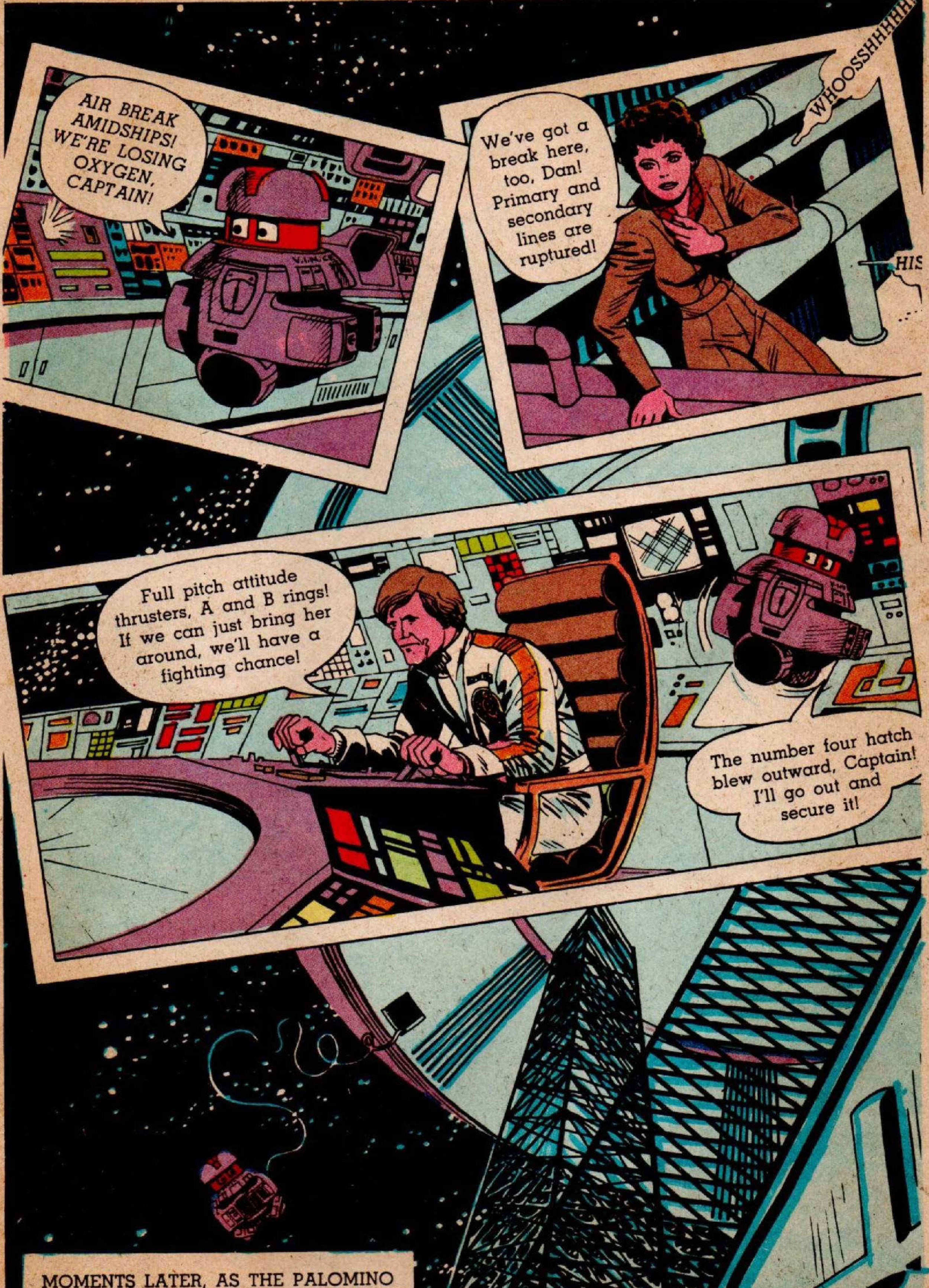

V.I.N.CENT. HEARS KATE'S REMARK ON THE COMMUNICATOR, AND HE QUICKLY REASSURES HER...
Not aliens, Dr. Kate! Our computerized print-out tells us that that is U.S. Space Probe One! The *CYGNUS*!

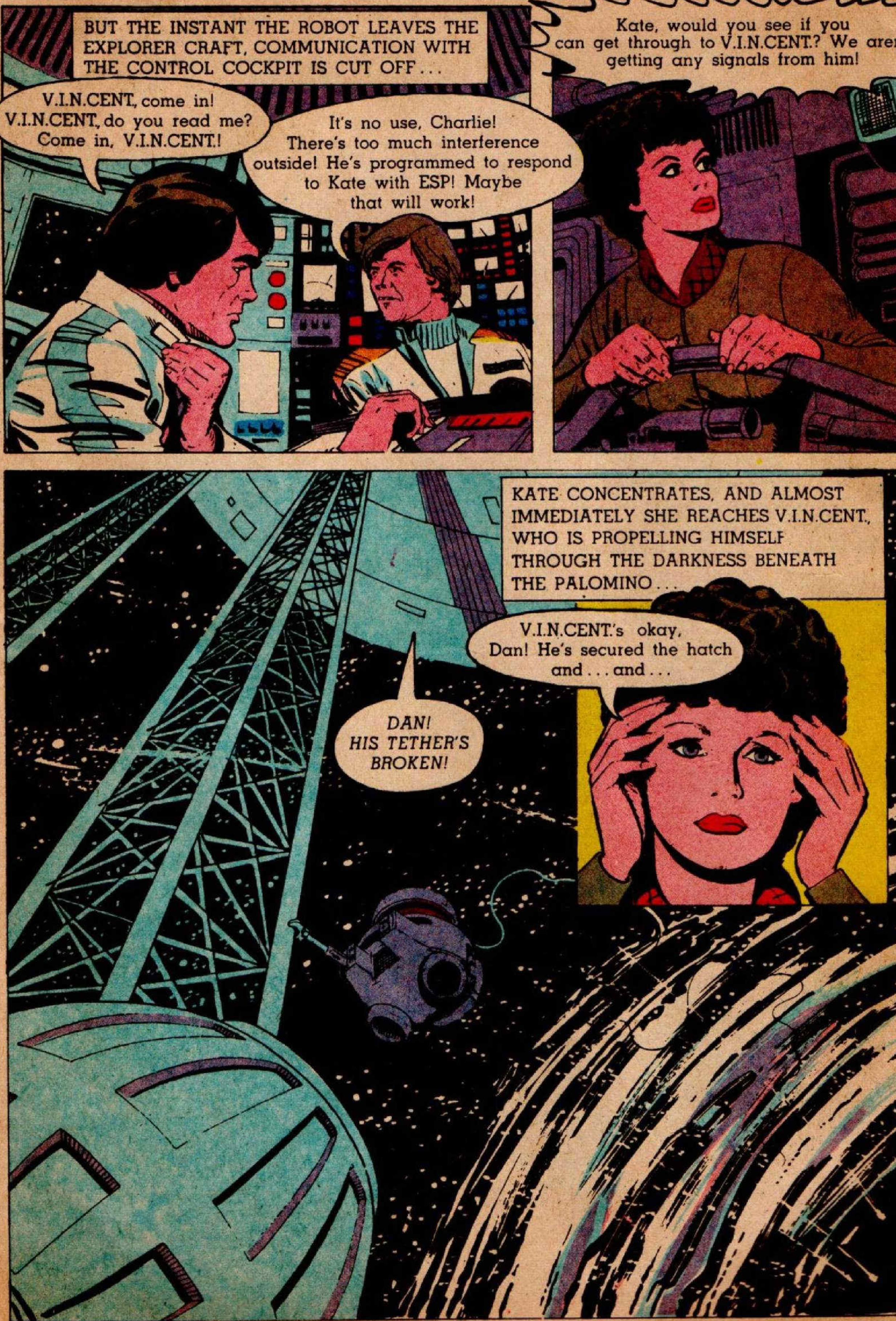

Dr. Kate, wasn't the Cygnus the ship your father was on?
Yes! Yes! It was! They were exploring, just as we are, and when they were recalled to earth they... they just vanished!

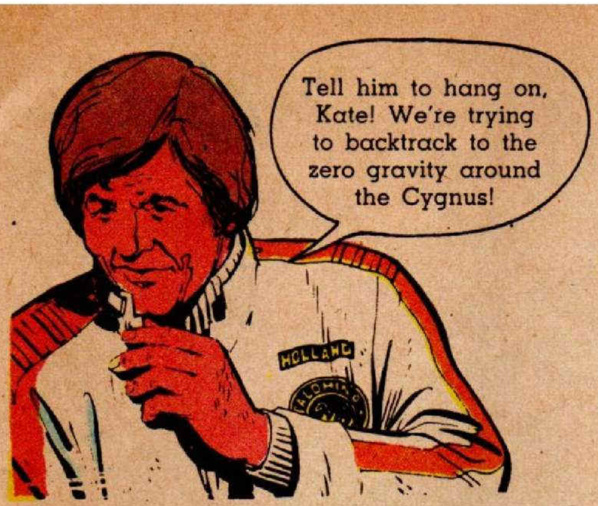

The Cygnus! After all these years! Why she's . . . she's become a legend!
And *HANS REINHARDT*, her commander–he's a legend, too! We're going aboard, aren't we? This is the story of a lifetime!
Full power on the thrusters, V.I.N.CENT.! If we can get close enough, we can go aboard on tethers!
Could there be anyone aboard? Are you picking up anything on the sensors, Charlie?
Negative! It must be a ghost ship! Like the Flying Dutchman!
THE DANGER OF VENTURING TOO NEAR THE BLACK HOLE IS OBVIOUS, BUT THE CREW ABOARD THE PALOMINO CANNOT IGNORE THE RIDDLE OF THE CYGNUS! HOLLAND BRINGS THE EXPLORER CRAFT AROUND ON A COURSE TOWARD THE GIANT SPACE SHIP . . .


THE CRAFT IS BUFFETED BY TURBULENCE AS SHE CHANGES ATTITUDE...
Can the engines operate against that much force when we turn back?
Gravity pull is .46963 and rising! She's bucking like a bronco!
What on earth? It's smooth as gla Zero gravity!
AS THE PALOMINO CLOSES ON THE CYGNUS, THE TURBULENCE VANISHES! THE EXPLORER CRAFT SEEMS TO HOVER...

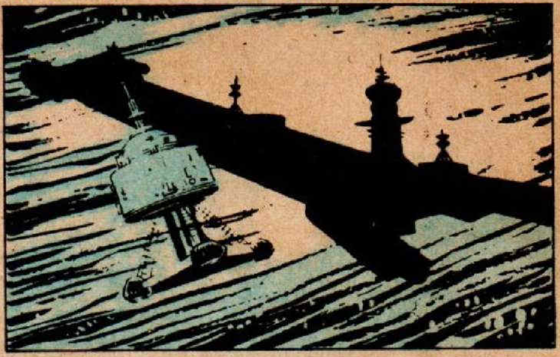

It's got us! Quick! A hundred percent on roll-jet quads!
BUT ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE CYGNUS, THE PALOMINO STARTS TO FALL AGAIN TOWARD THE BLACK HOLE...


AIR BREAK AMIDSHIPS! WE'RE LOSING OXYGEN, CAPTAIN!
WHOOSSHHHHH
We've got a break here, too, Dan! Primary and secondary lines are ruptured!
HIS
Full pitch attitude thrusters, A and B rings! If we can just bring her around, we'll have a fighting chance!
The number four hatch blew outward, Captain! I'll go out and secure it!
MOMENTS LATER, AS THE PALOMINO STRUGGLES TO AVOID THE TERRIBLE GRAVITY OF THE BLACK HOLE . . .

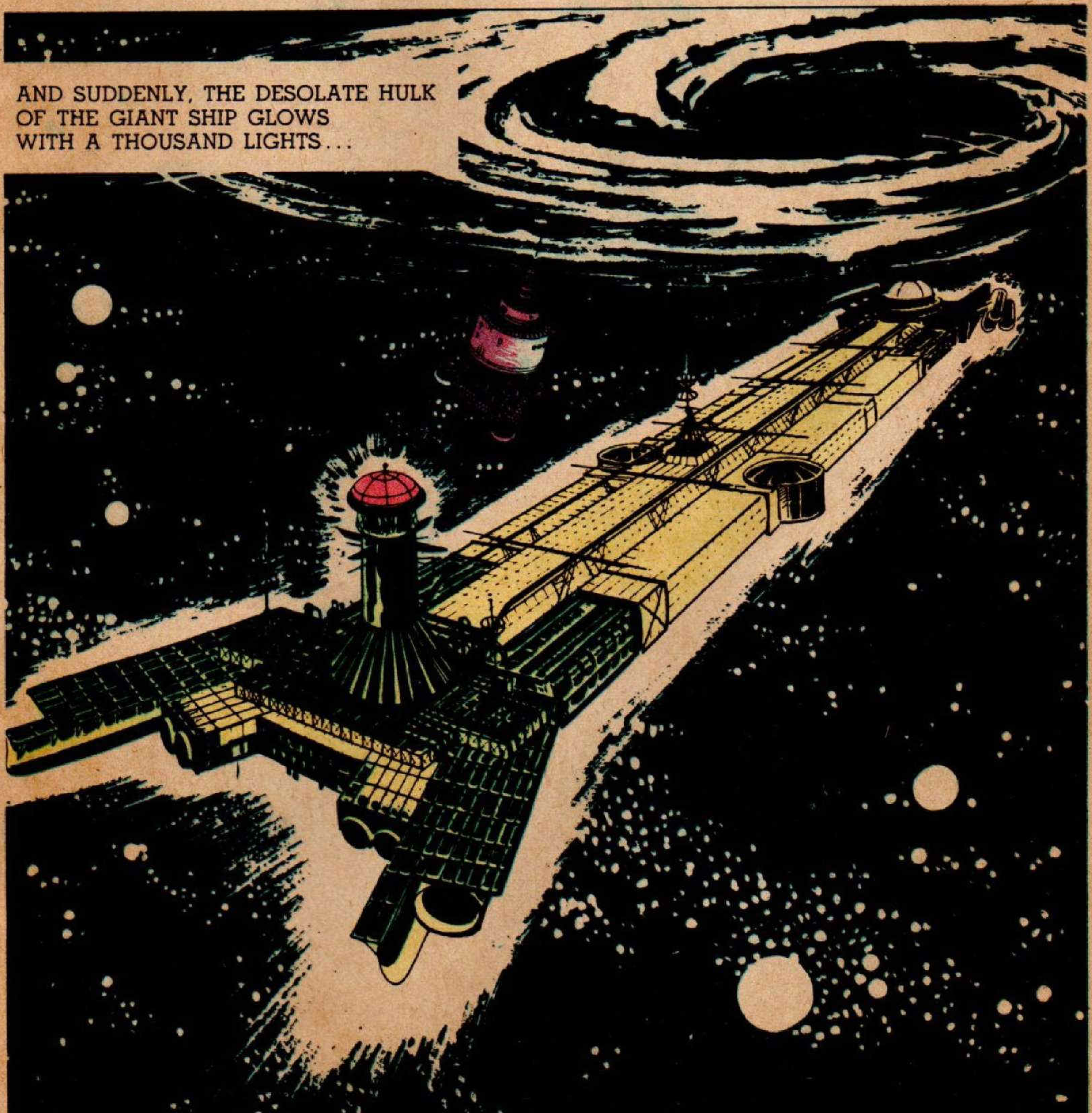

BUT THE INSTANT THE ROBOT LEAVES THE EXPLORER CRAFT, COMMUNICATION WITH THE CONTROL COCKPIT IS CUT OFF...
V.I.N.CENT, come in! V.I.N.CENT, do you read me? Come in, V.I.N.CENT.!
It's no use, Charlie! There's too much interference outside! He's programmed to respond to Kate with ESP! Maybe that will work!
Kate, would you see if you can get through to V.I.N.CENT.? We aren't getting any signals from him!
KATE CONCENTRATES, AND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY SHE REACHES V.I.N.CENT., WHO IS PROPELLING HIMSELF THROUGH THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE PALOMINO...
V.I.N.CENT.'s okay, Dan! He's secured the hatch and...and...
DAN! HIS TETHER'S BROKEN!

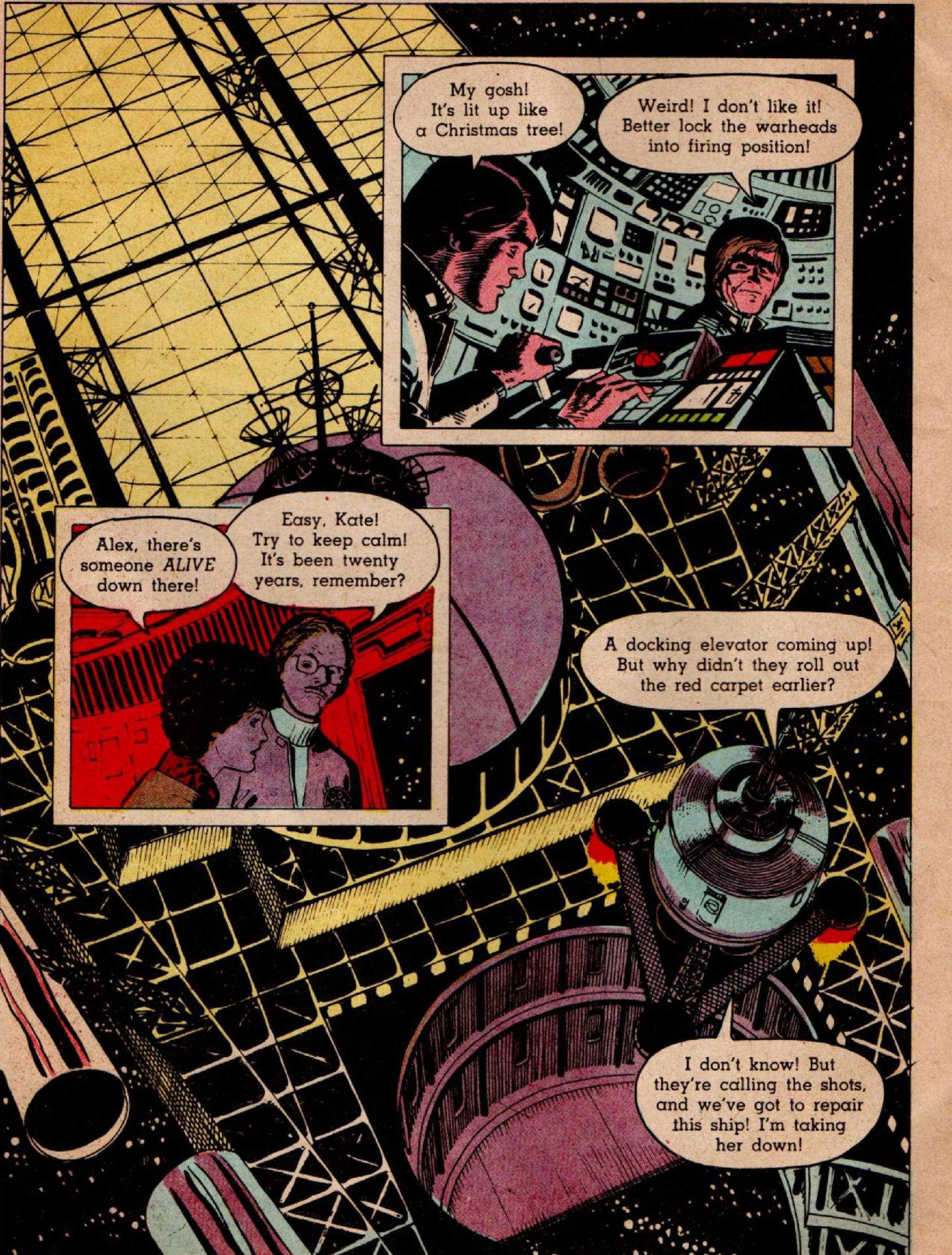

Tell him to hang on, Kate! We're trying to backtrack to the zero gravity around the Cygnus!
HOLLAND
PALOMINO

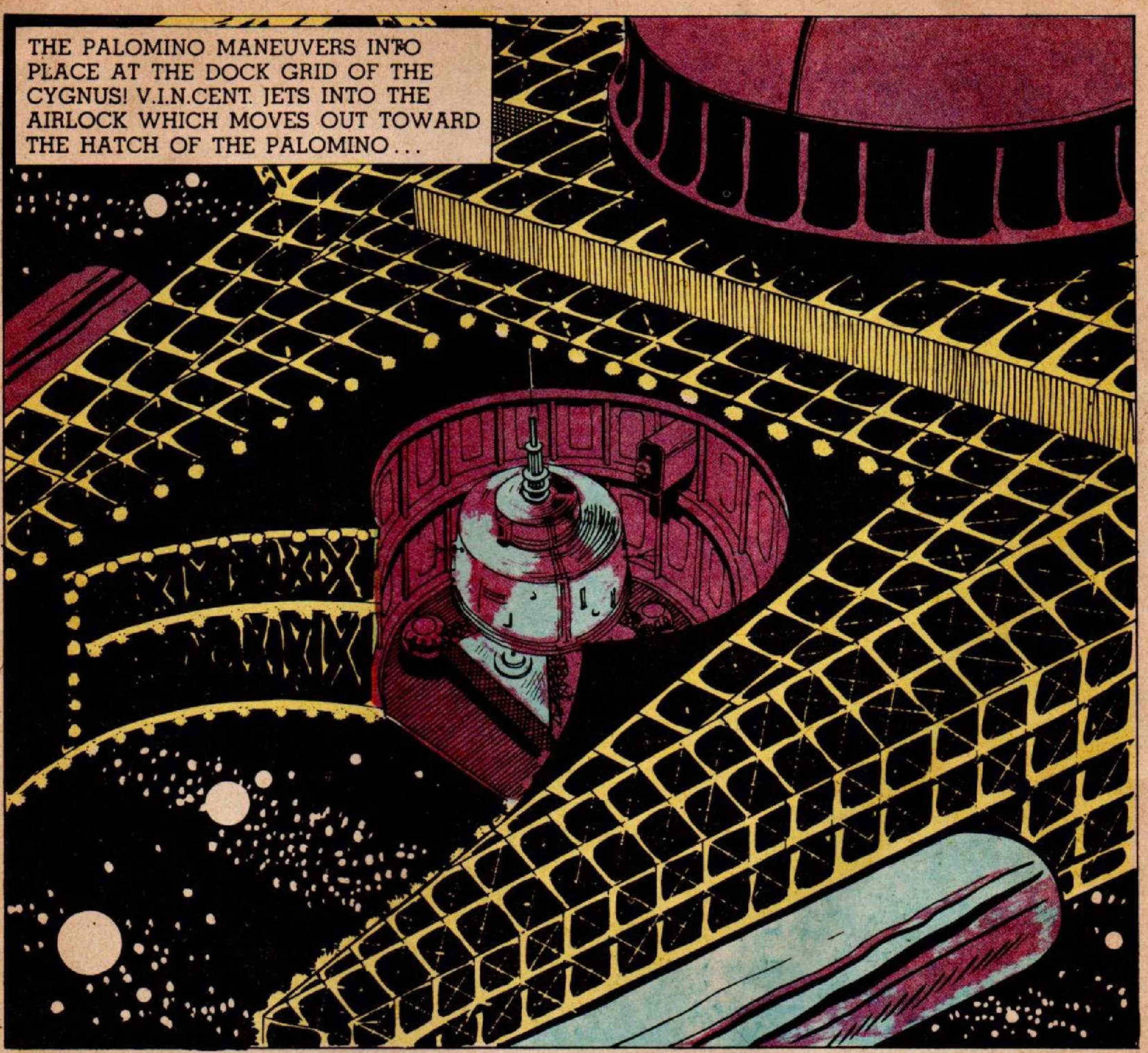
THE PALOMINO SHUDDERS ITS WAY BACK INTO THE CALM AROUND THE CYGNUS...

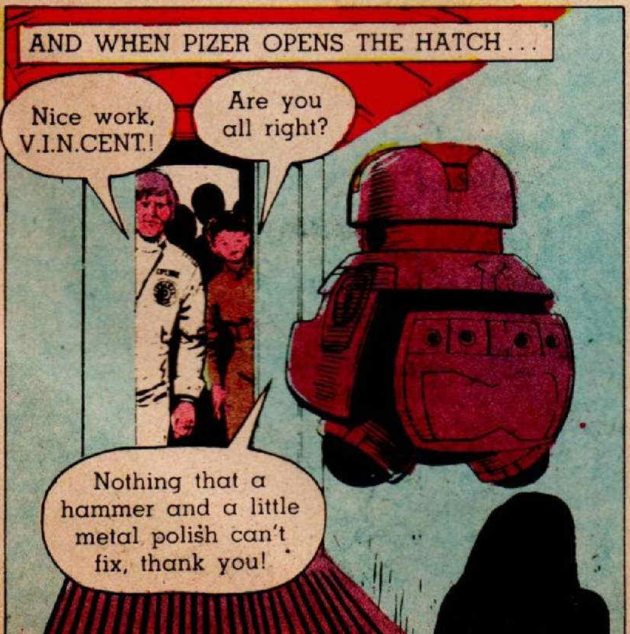


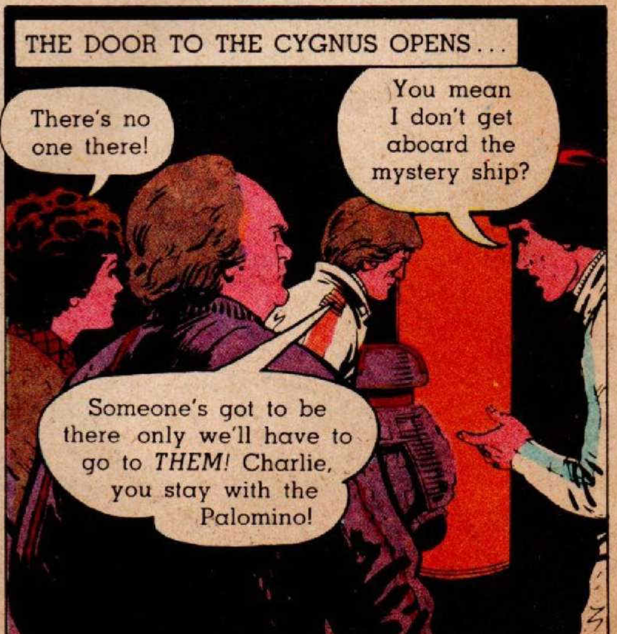
AND SUDDENLY, THE DESOLATE HULK OF THE GIANT SHIP GLOWS WITH A THOUSAND LIGHTS...

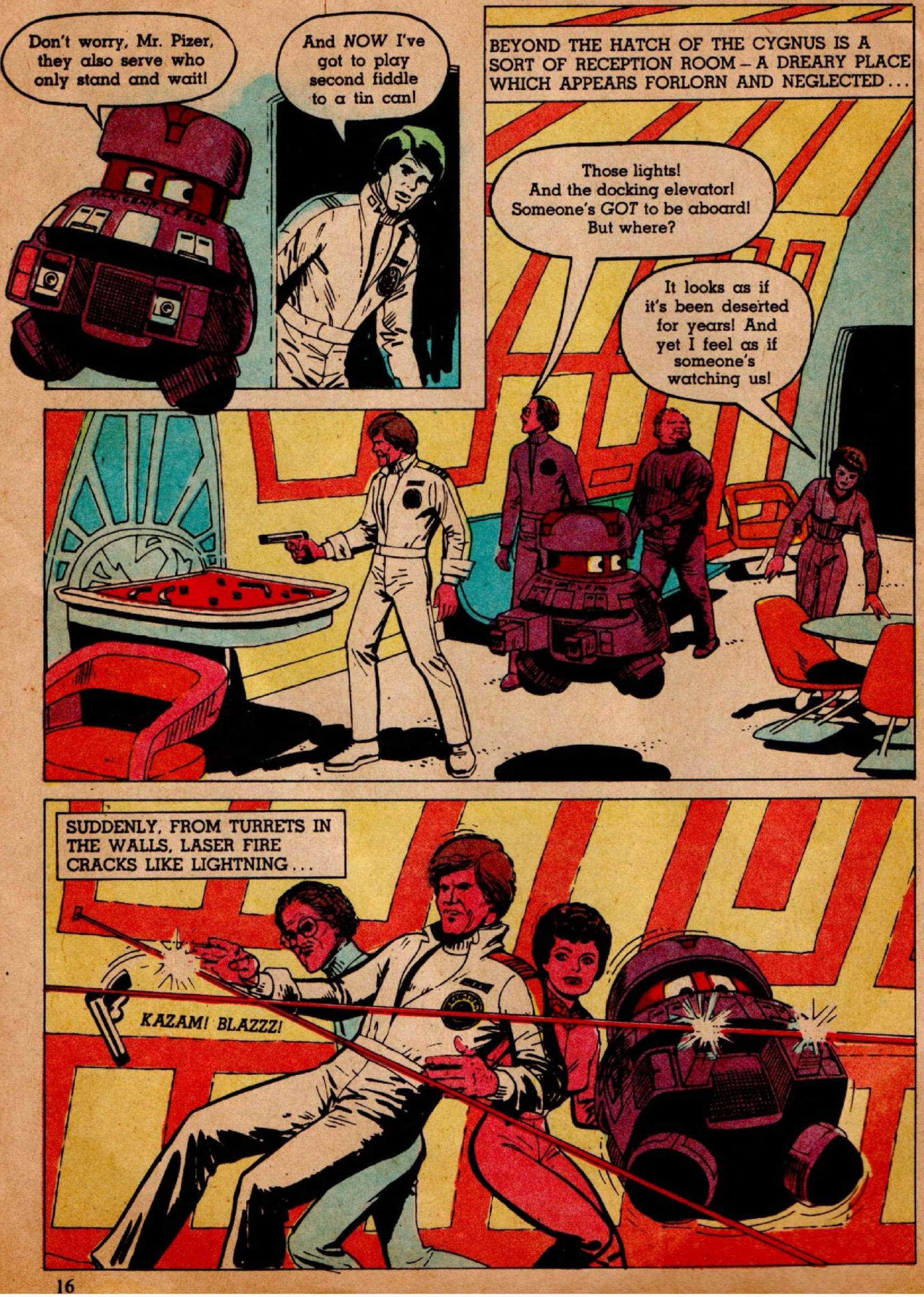


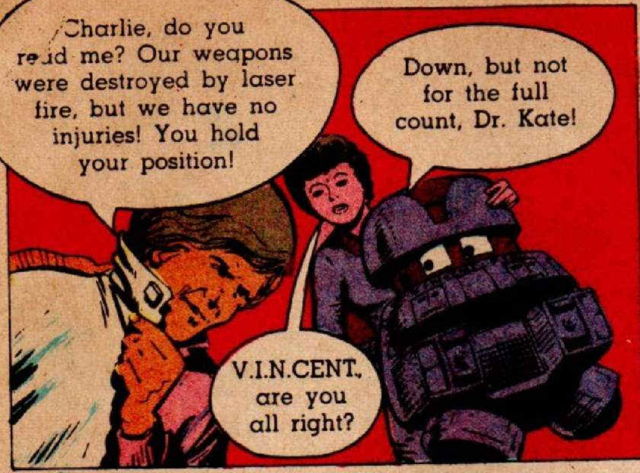

My gosh! It's lit up like a Christmas tree!
Weird! I don't like it! Better lock the warheads into firing position!
Alex, there's someone *ALIVE* down there!
Easy, Kate! Try to keep calm! It's been twenty years, remember?
A docking elevator coming up! But why didn't they roll out the red carpet earlier?
I don't know! But they're calling the shots, and we've got to repair this ship! I'm taking her down!

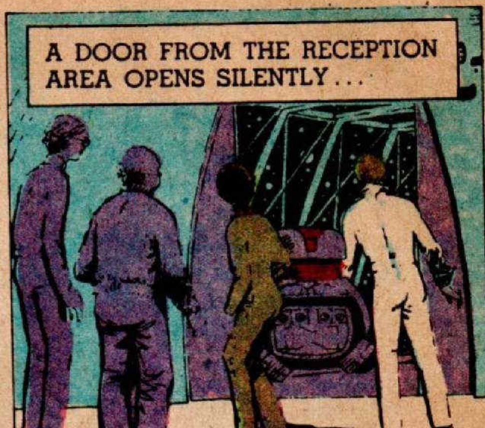

THE PALOMINO MANEUVERS INTO PLACE AT THE DOCK GRID OF THE CYGNUS! V.I.N.CENT. JETS INTO THE AIRLOCK WHICH MOVES OUT TOWARD THE HATCH OF THE PALOMINO . . .

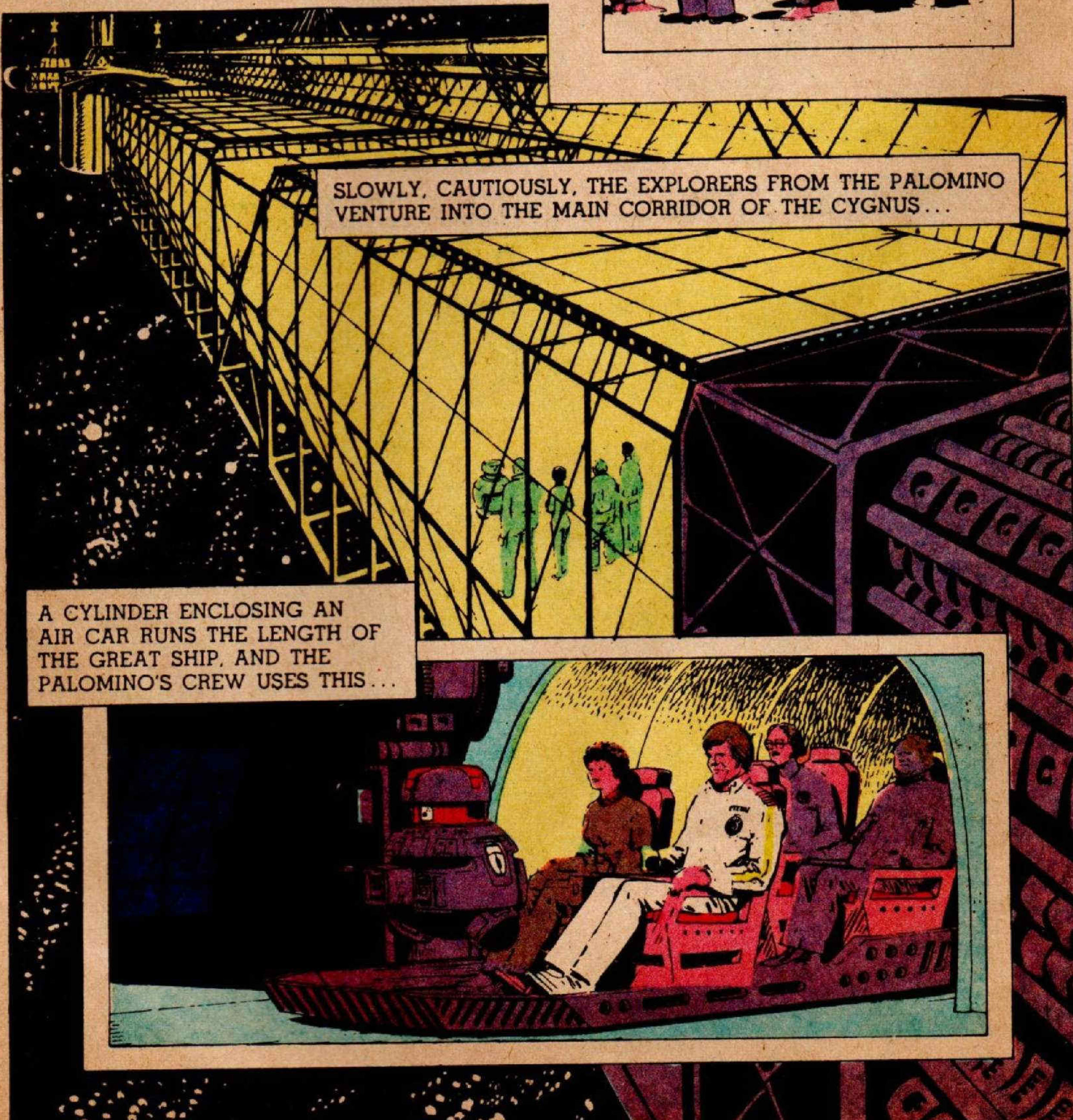

AND WHEN PIZER OPENS THE HATCH . . .
Nice work, V.I.N.CENT.!
Are you all right?
Nothing that a hammer and a little metal polish can't fix, thank you!

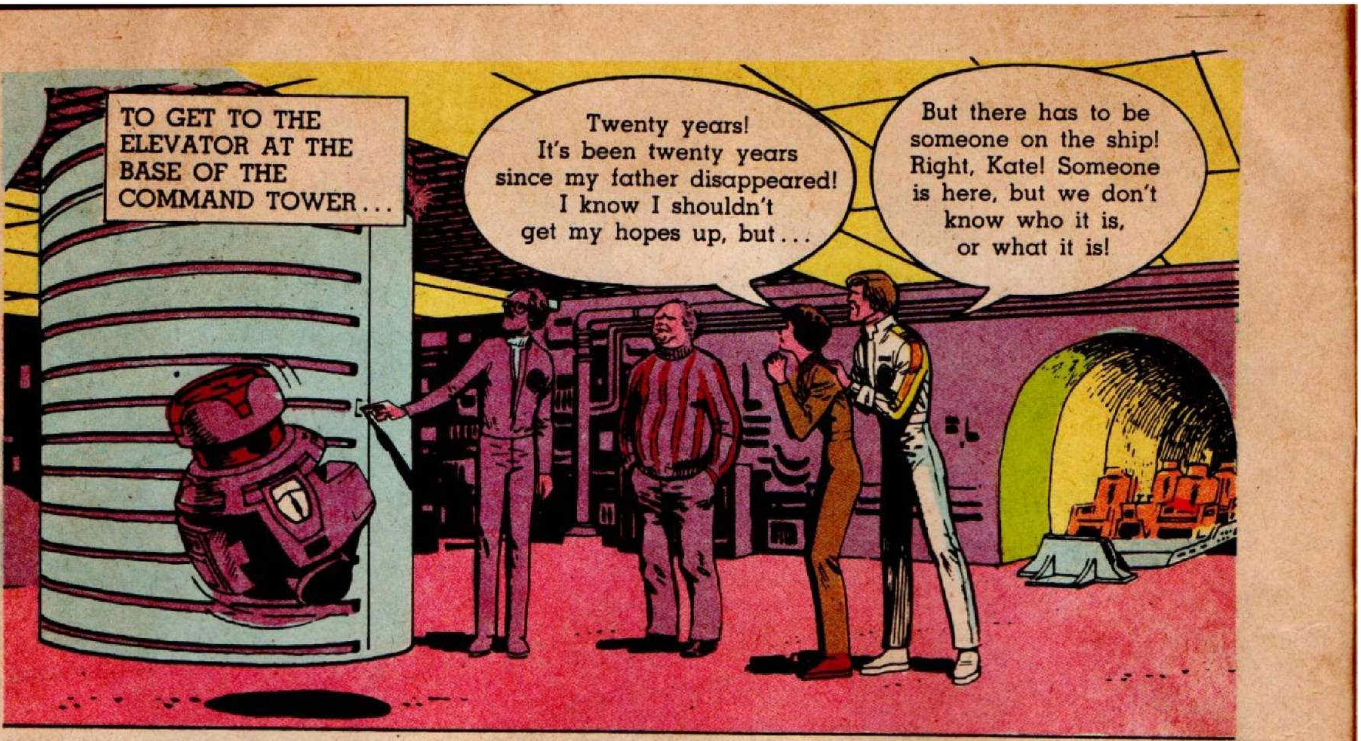

THE DOOR TO THE CYGNUS OPENS . . .
There's no one there!
You mean I don't get aboard the mystery ship?
Someone's got to be there only we'll have to go to *THEM*! Charlie, you stay with the Palomino!

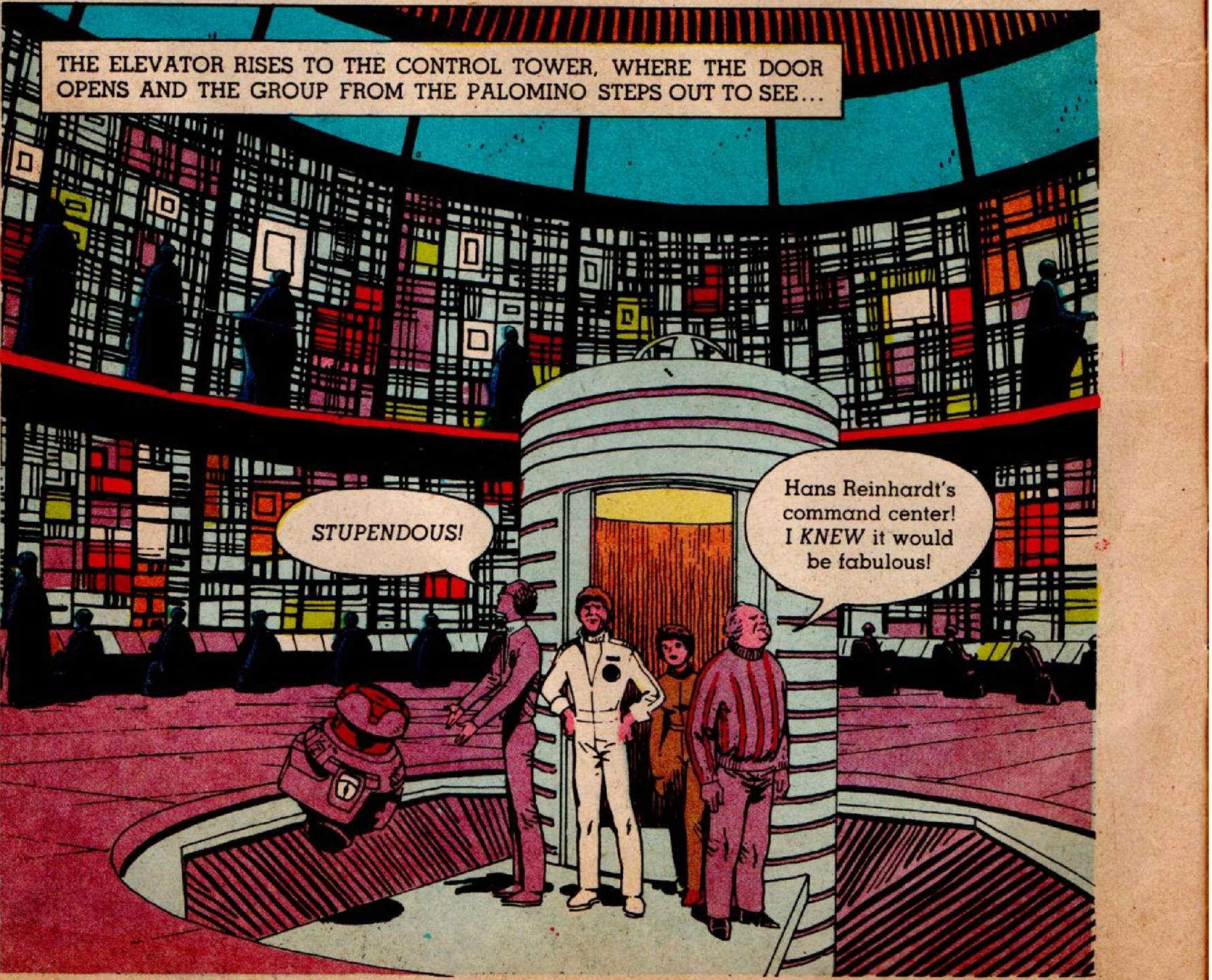

Don't worry, Mr. Pizer, they also serve who only stand and wait!
And NOW I've got to play second fiddle to a tin can!
BEYOND THE HATCH OF THE CYGNUS IS A SORT OF RECEPTION ROOM – A DREARY PLACE WHICH APPEARS FORLORN AND NEGLECTED . . .
Those lights! And the docking elevator! Someone's GOT to be aboard! But where?
It looks as if it's been deserted for years! And yet I feel as if someone's watching us!
SUDDENLY, FROM TURRETS IN THE WALLS, LASER FIRE CRACKS LIKE LIGHTNING . . .
KAZAM! BLAZZZ!

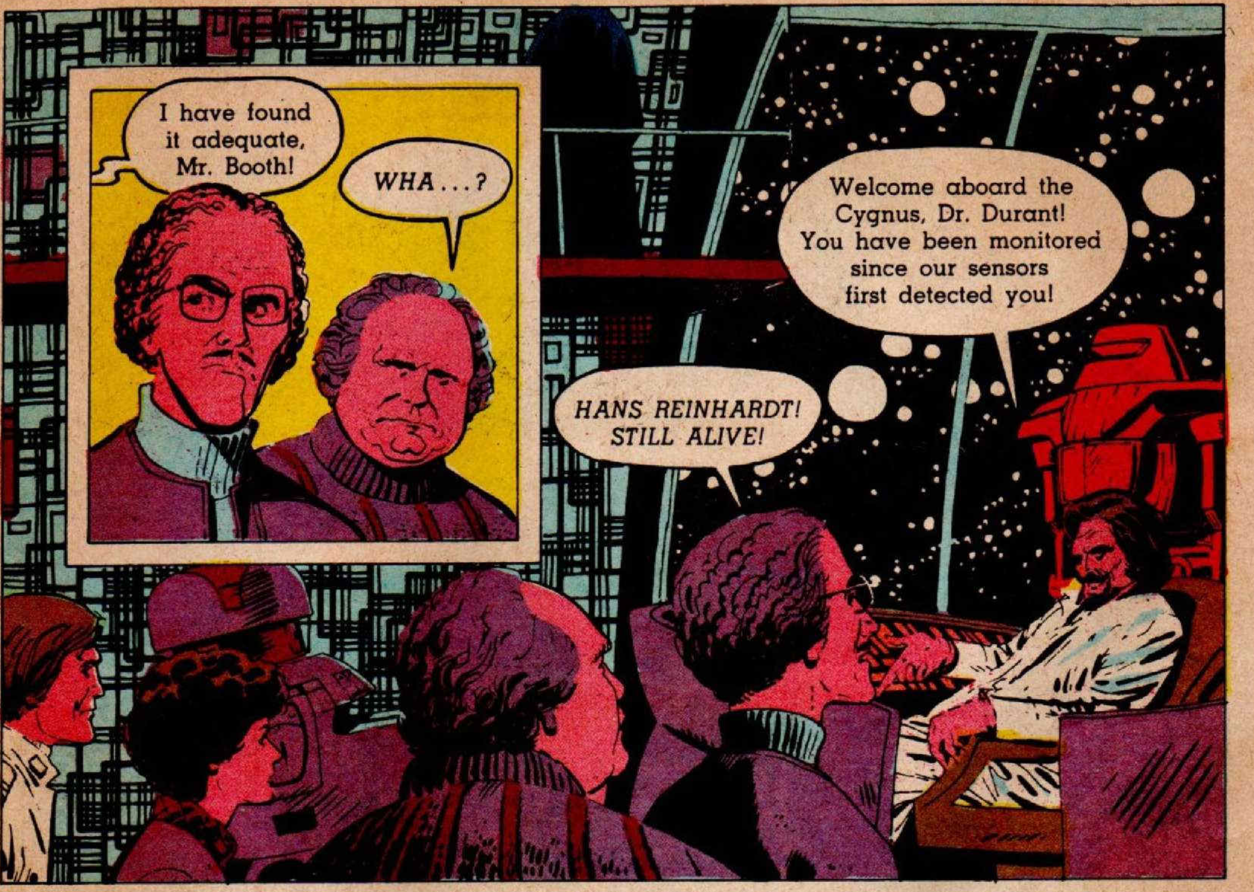

Charlie, do you read me? Our weapons were destroyed by laser fire, but we have no injuries! You hold your position!
Down, but not for the full count, Dr. Kate!
V.I.N.CENT., are you all right?

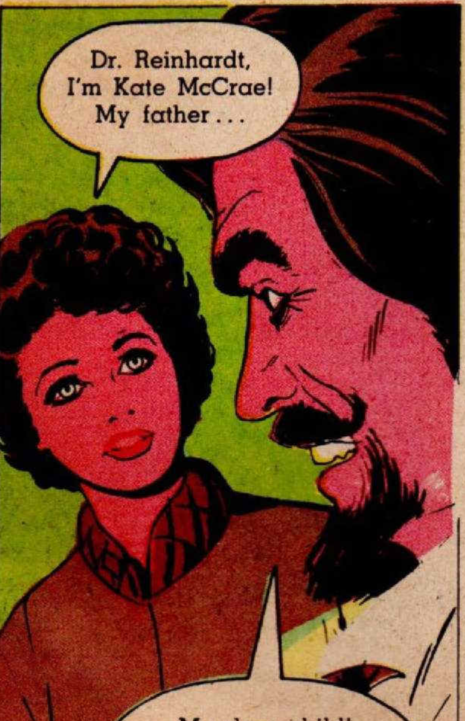

A DOOR FROM THE RECEPTION AREA OPENS SILENTLY . . .

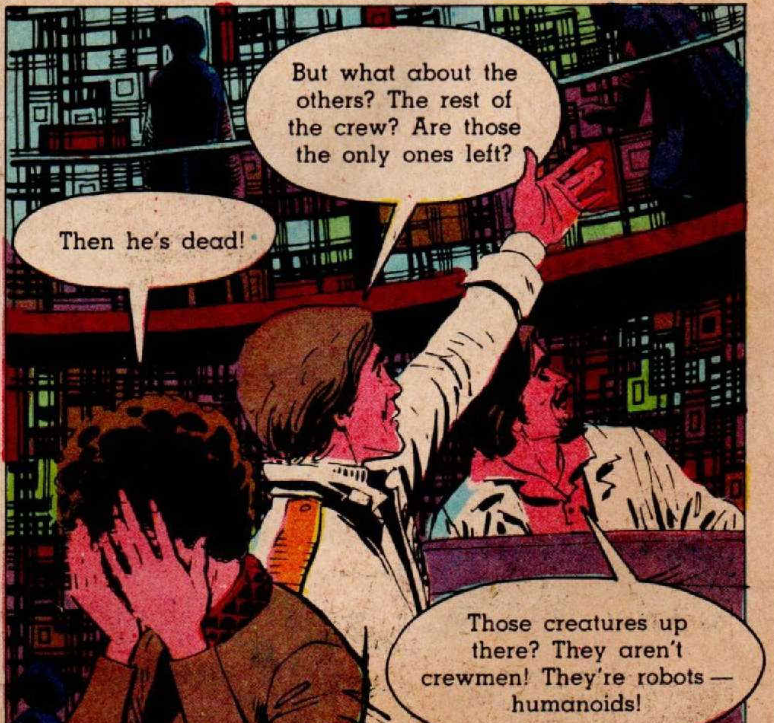

SLOWLY, CAUTIOUSLY, THE EXPLORERS FROM THE PALOMINO VENTURE INTO THE MAIN CORRIDOR OF THE CYGNUS . . .
A CYLINDER ENCLOSING AN AIR CAR RUNS THE LENGTH OF THE GREAT SHIP, AND THE PALOMINO'S CREW USES THIS . . .

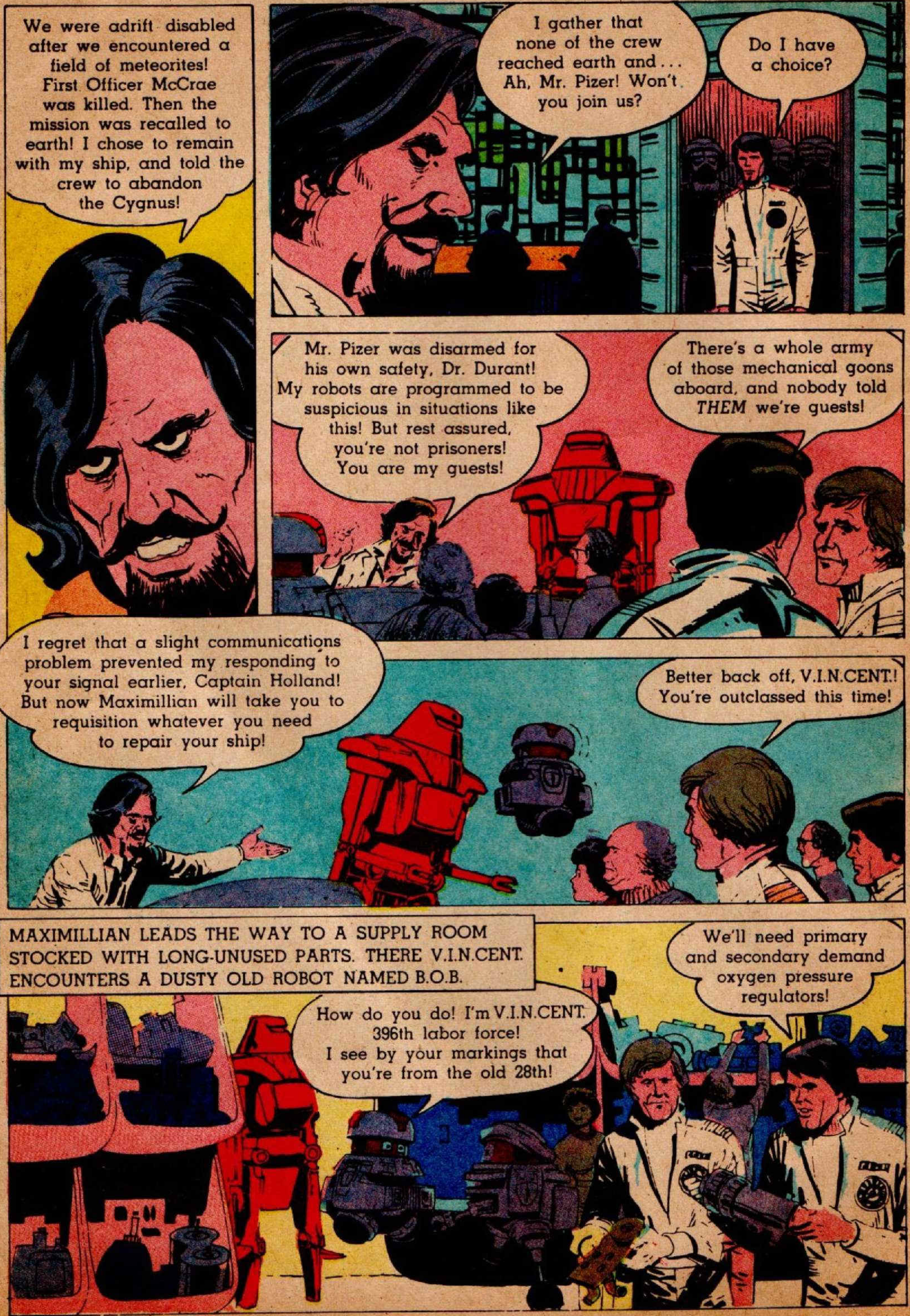

TO GET TO THE ELEVATOR AT THE BASE OF THE COMMAND TOWER . . .
Twenty years! It's been twenty years since my father disappeared! I know I shouldn't get my hopes up, but . . .
But there has to be someone on the ship! Right, Kate! Someone is here, but we don't know who it is, or what it is!

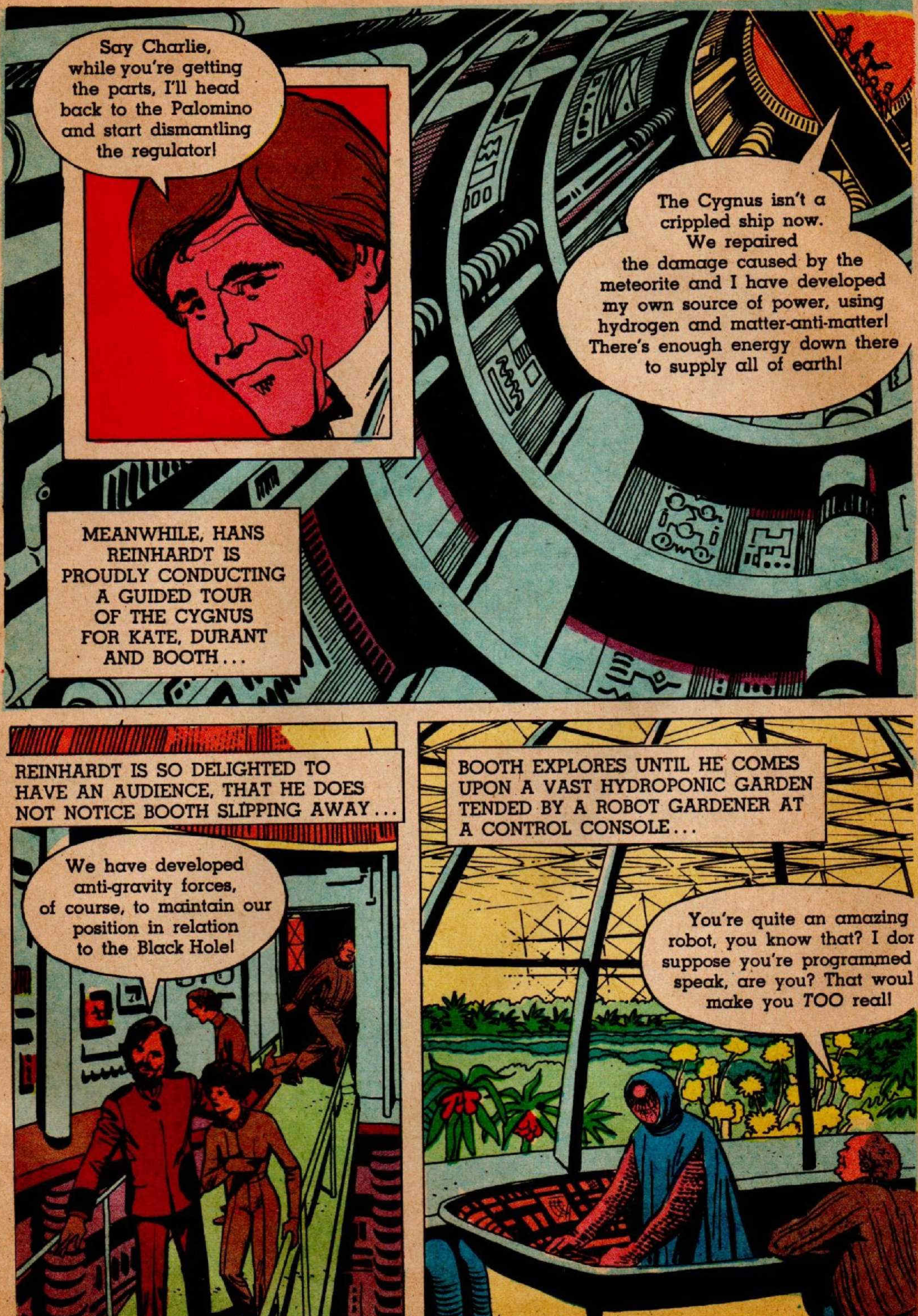

THE ELEVATOR RISES TO THE CONTROL TOWER, WHERE THE DOOR OPENS AND THE GROUP FROM THE PALOMINO STEPS OUT TO SEE . . .
STUPENDOUS!
Hans Reinhardt's command center! I *KNEW* it would be fabulous!

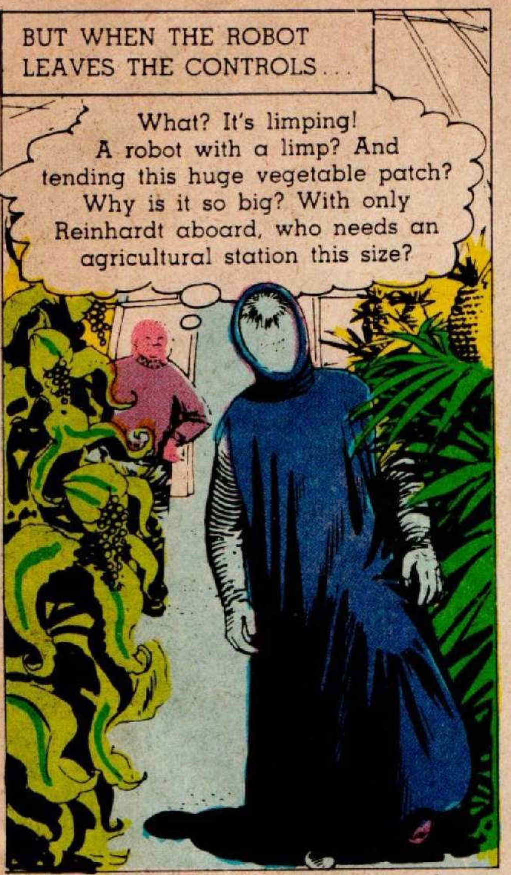

I have found it adequate, Mr. Booth!
WHA . . . ?
Welcome aboard the Cygnus, Dr. Durant! You have been monitored since our sensors first detected you!
HANS REINHARDT! STILL ALIVE!

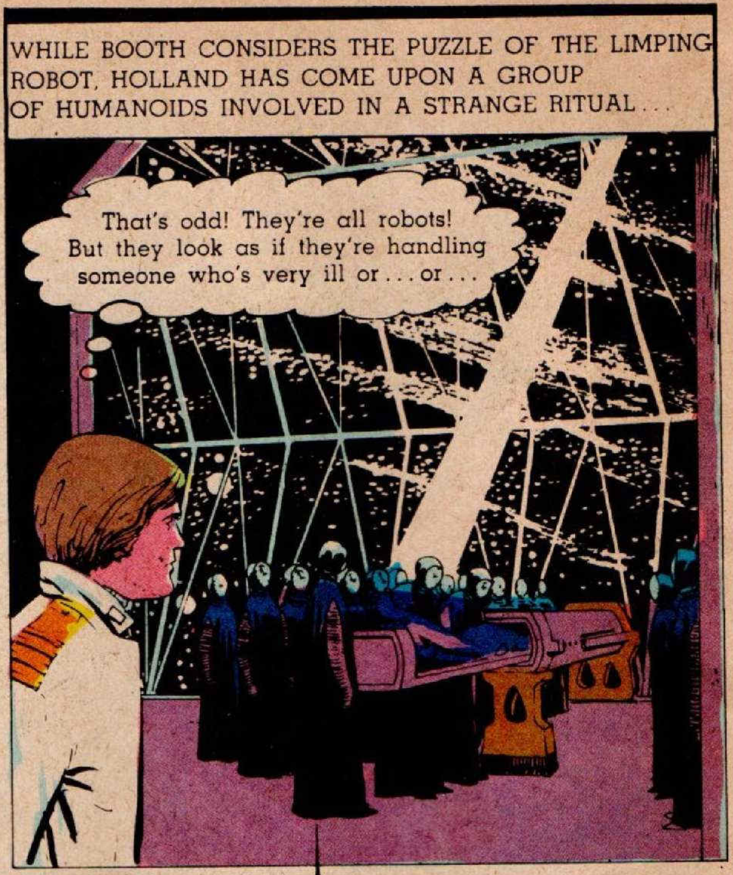

Dr. Reinhardt, I'm Kate McCrae! My father . . .
My dear child! I am so sorry! Your father was a man to be proud of!

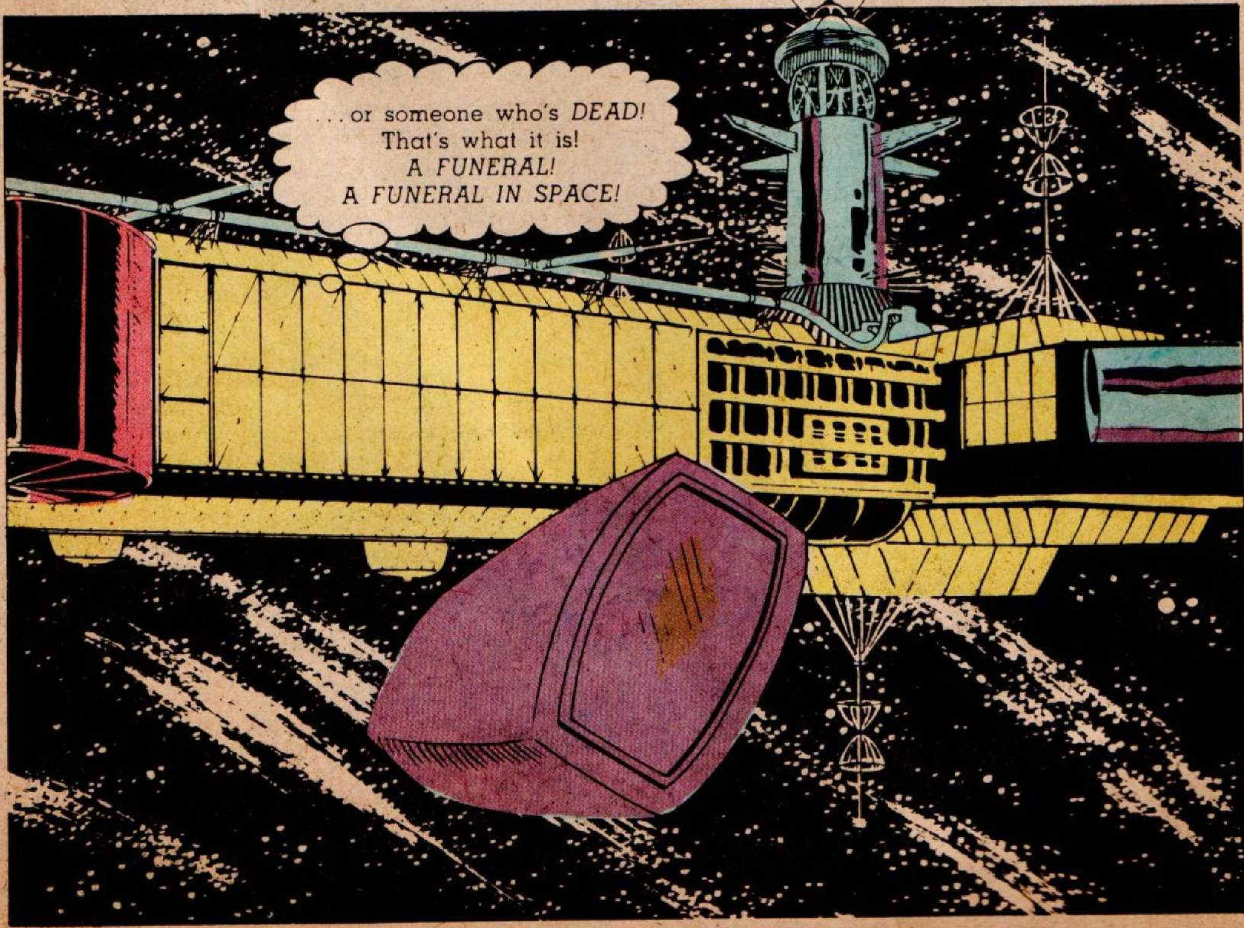

But what about the others? The rest of the crew? Are those the only ones left?
Then he's dead!
Those creatures up there? They aren't crewmen! They're robots — humanoids!

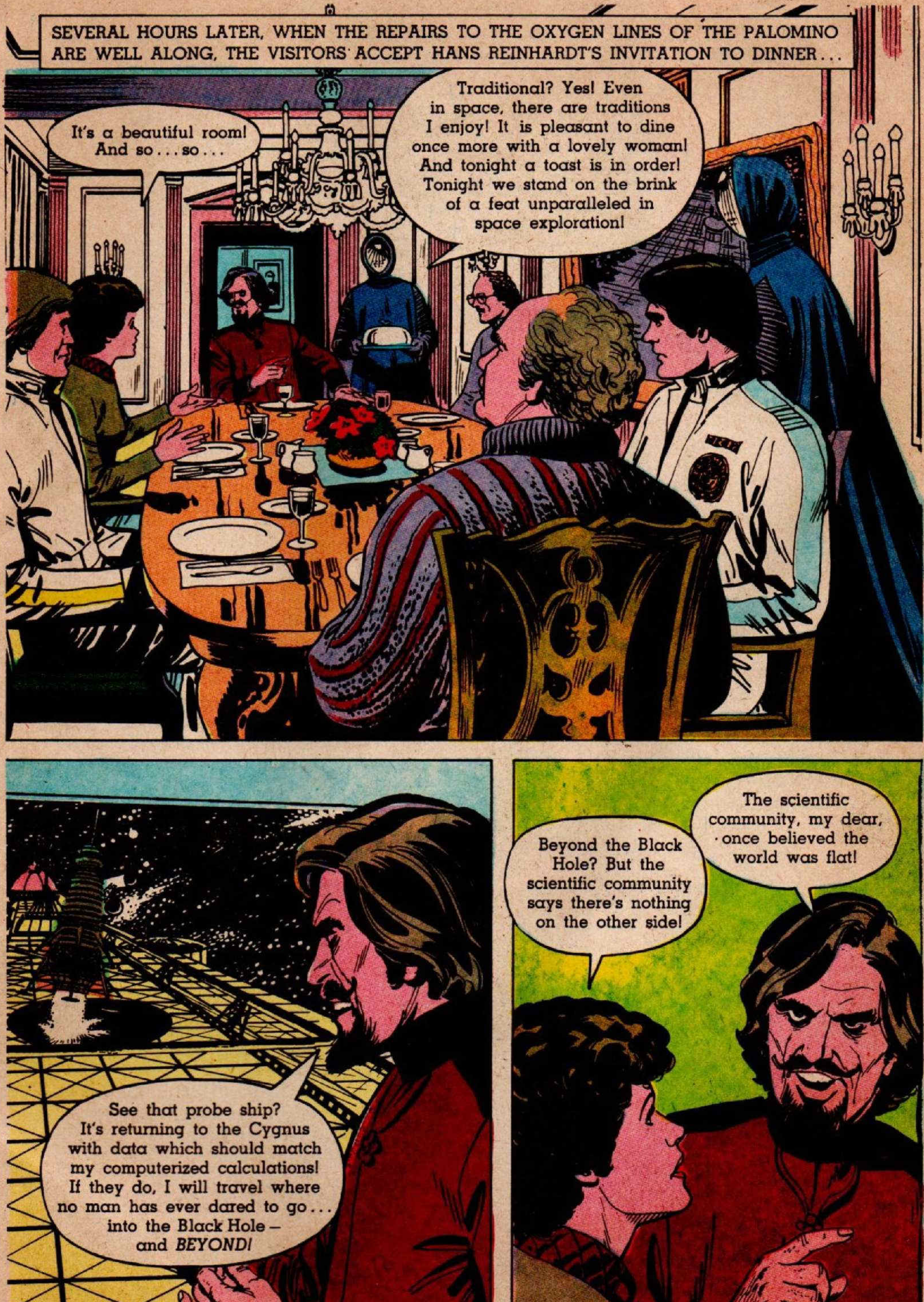

We were adrift disabled after we encountered a field of meteorites! First Officer McCrae was killed. Then the mission was recalled to earth! I chose to remain with my ship, and told the crew to abandon the Cygnus!
I gather that none of the crew reached earth and . . . Ah, Mr. Pizer! Won't you join us?
Do I have a choice?
Mr. Pizer was disarmed for his own safety, Dr. Durant! My robots are programmed to be suspicious in situations like this! But rest assured, you're not prisoners! You are my guests!
There's a whole army of those mechanical goons aboard, and nobody told *THEM* we're guests!
I regret that a slight communications problem prevented my responding to your signal earlier, Captain Holland! But now Maximillian will take you to requisition whatever you need to repair your ship!
Better back off, V.I.N.CENT.! You're outclassed this time!
MAXIMILLIAN LEADS THE WAY TO A SUPPLY ROOM STOCKED WITH LONG-UNUSED PARTS. THERE V.I.N.CENT. ENCOUNTERS A DUSTY OLD ROBOT NAMED B.O.B.
We'll need primary and secondary demand oxygen pressure regulators!
How do you do! I'm V.I.N.CENT. 396th labor force! I see by your markings that you're from the old 28th!

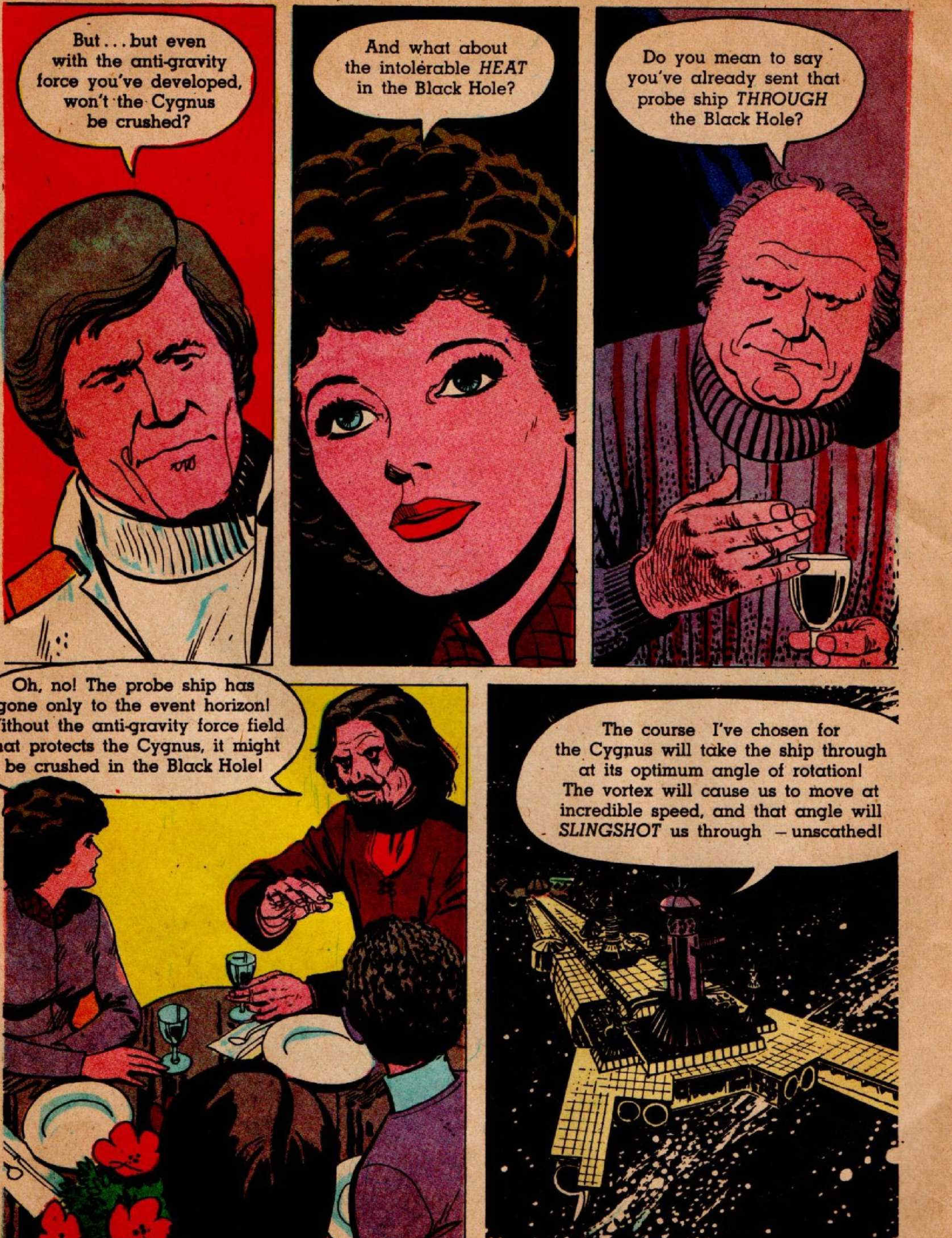

Say Charlie, while you're getting the parts, I'll head back to the Palomino and start dismantling the regulator!
The Cygnus isn't a crippled ship now. We repaired the damage caused by the meteorite and I have developed my own source of power, using hydrogen and matter-anti-matter! There's enough energy down there to supply all of earth!
MEANWHILE, HANS REINHARDT IS PROUDLY CONDUCTING A GUIDED TOUR OF THE CYGNUS FOR KATE, DURANT AND BOOTH...
REINHARDT IS SO DELIGHTED TO HAVE AN AUDIENCE, THAT HE DOES NOT NOTICE BOOTH SLIPPING AWAY...
We have developed anti-gravity forces, of course, to maintain our position in relation to the Black Hole!
BOOTH EXPLORES UNTIL HE COMES UPON A VAST HYDROPONIC GARDEN TENDED BY A ROBOT GARDENER AT A CONTROL CONSOLE...
You're quite an amazing robot, you know that? I dor suppose you're programmed speak, are you? That woul make you *TOO* real!

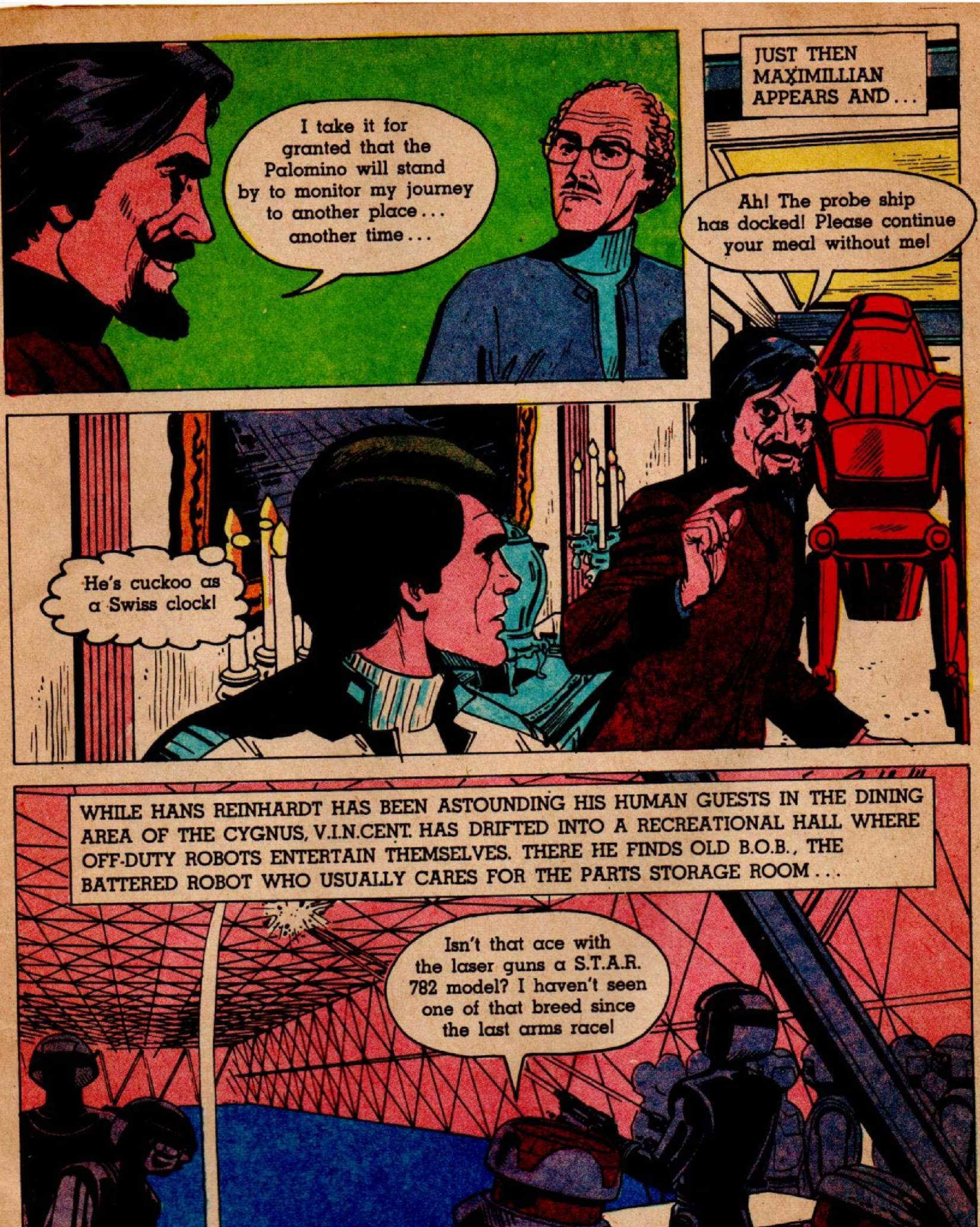

BUT WHEN THE ROBOT LEAVES THE CONTROLS...
What? It's limping! A robot with a limp? And tending this huge vegetable patch? Why is it so big? With only Reinhardt aboard, who needs an agricultural station this size?

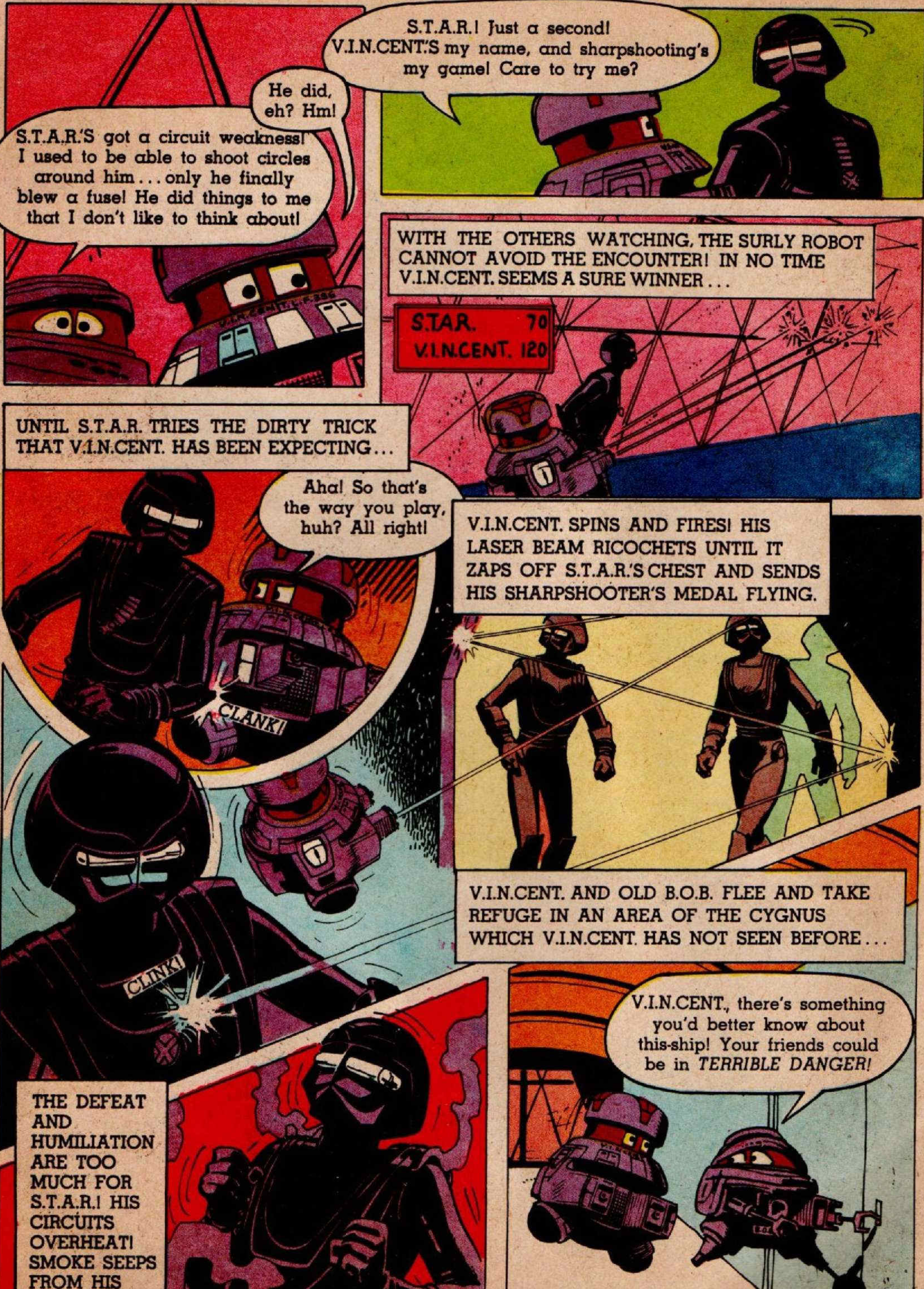

WHILE BOOTH CONSIDERS THE PUZZLE OF THE LIMPING ROBOT, HOLLAND HAS COME UPON A GROUP OF HUMANOIDS INVOLVED IN A STRANGE RITUAL...
That's odd! They're all robots! But they look as if they're handling someone who's very ill or...or...

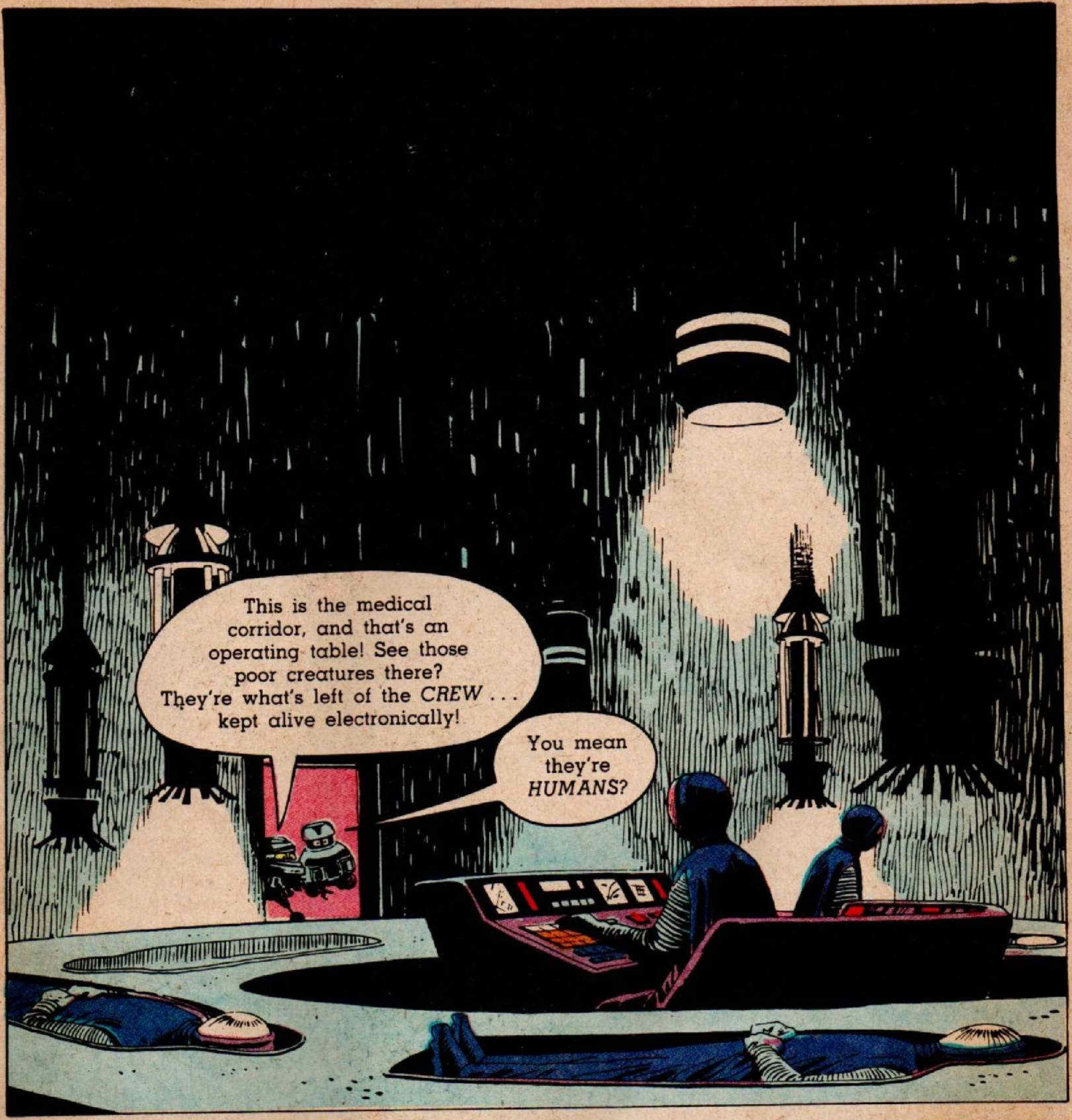

...or someone who's *DEAD!* That's what it is! *A FUNERAL! A FUNERAL IN SPACE!*

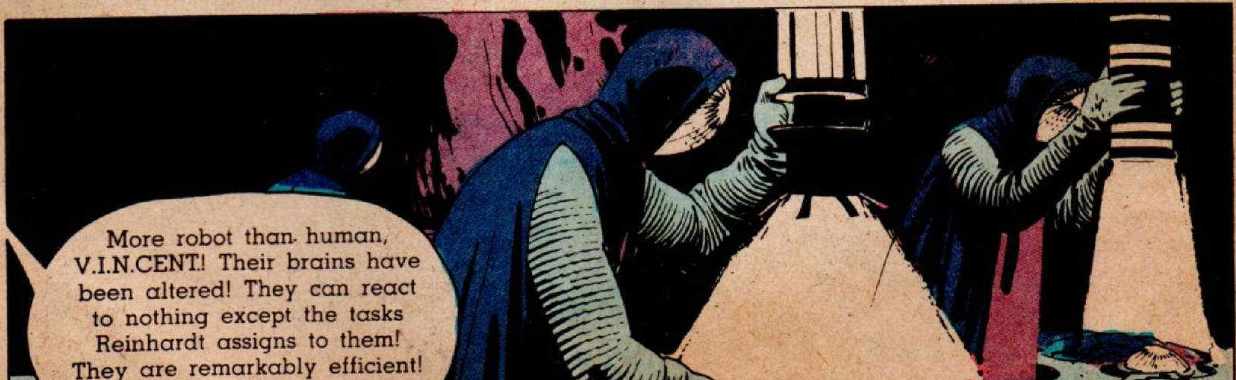

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, WHEN THE REPAIRS TO THE OXYGEN LINES OF THE PALOMINO ARE WELL ALONG, THE VISITORS ACCEPT HANS REINHARDT'S INVITATION TO DINNER...
It's a beautiful room! And so... so...
Traditional? Yes! Even in space, there are traditions I enjoy! It is pleasant to dine once more with a lovely woman! And tonight a toast is in order! Tonight we stand on the brink of a feat unparalleled in space exploration!
See that probe ship? It's returning to the Cygnus with data which should match my computerized calculations! If they do, I will travel where no man has ever dared to go... into the Black Hole — and *BEYOND!*
Beyond the Black Hole? But the scientific community says there's nothing on the other side!
The scientific community, my dear, once believed the world was flat!

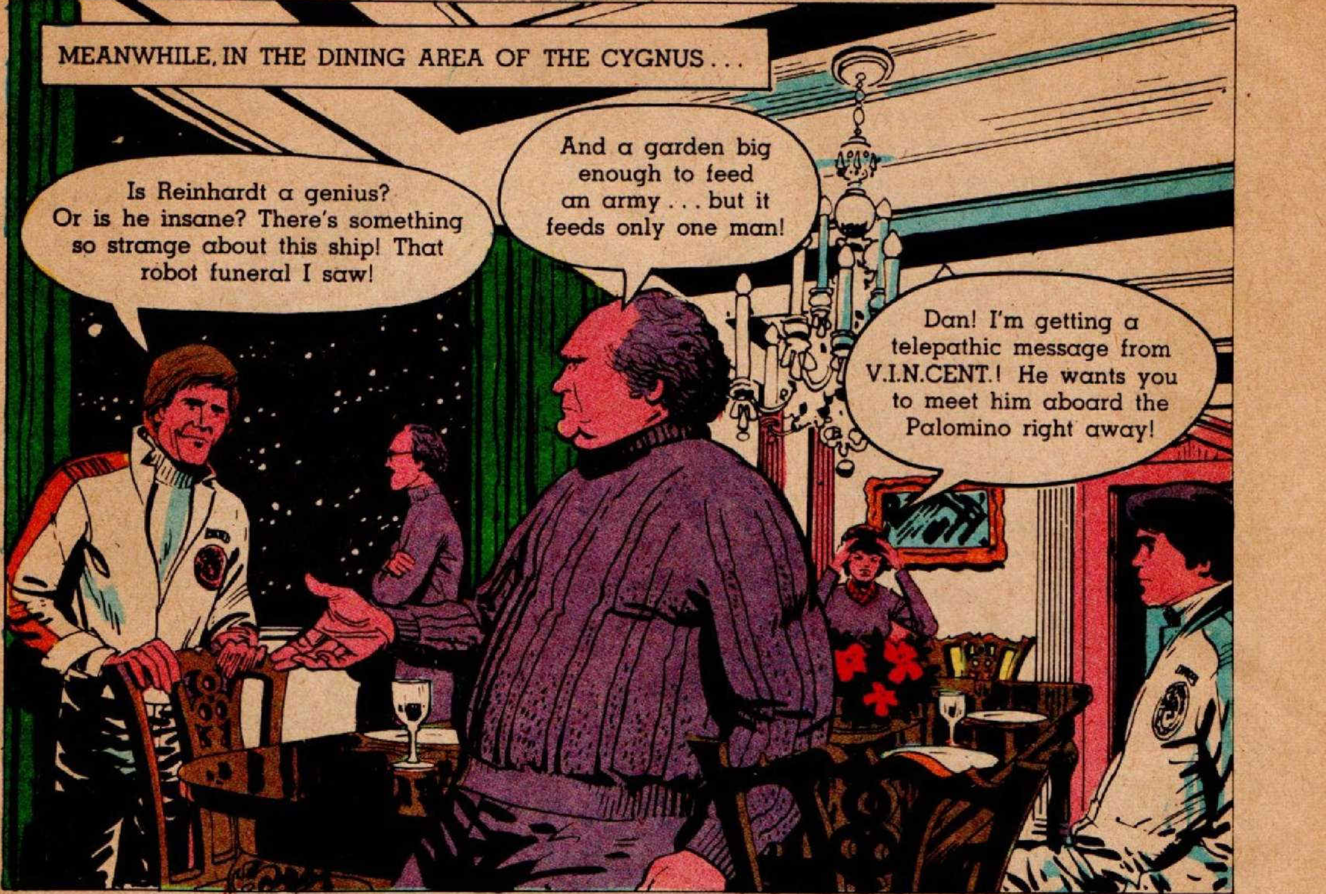

But... but even with the anti-gravity force you've developed, won't the Cygnus be crushed?
And what about the intolerable *HEAT* in the Black Hole?
Do you mean to say you've already sent that probe ship *THROUGH* the Black Hole?
Oh, no! The probe ship has gone only to the event horizon! Without the anti-gravity force field that protects the Cygnus, it might be crushed in the Black Hole!
The course I've chosen for the Cygnus will take the ship through at its optimum angle of rotation! The vortex will cause us to move at incredible speed, and that angle will *SLINGSHOT* us through – unscathed!

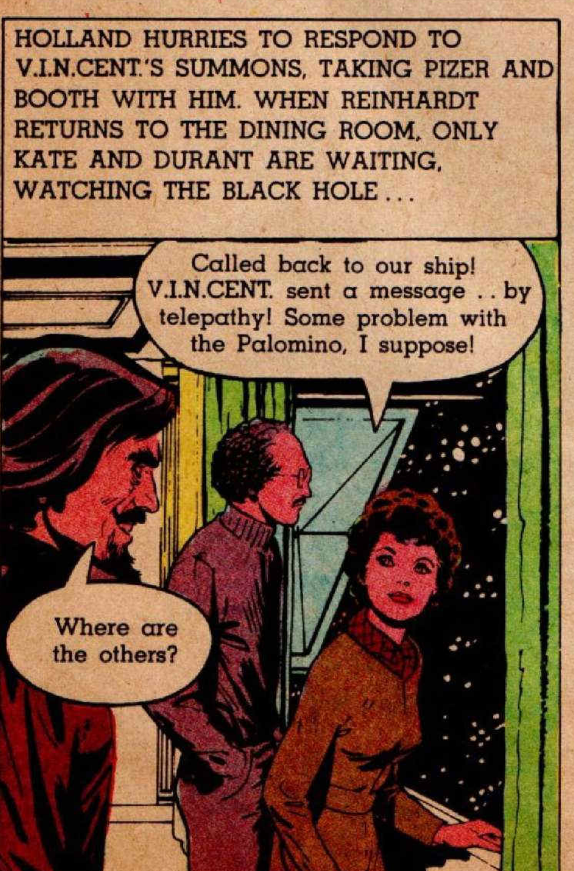

I take it for granted that the Palomino will stand by to monitor my journey to another place... another time...
JUST THEN MAXIMILLIAN APPEARS AND...
Ah! The probe ship has docked! Please continue your meal without me!
He's cuckoo as a Swiss clock!
WHILE HANS REINHARDT HAS BEEN ASTOUNDING HIS HUMAN GUESTS IN THE DINING AREA OF THE CYGNUS, V.I.N.CENT. HAS DRIFTED INTO A RECREATIONAL HALL WHERE OFF-DUTY ROBOTS ENTERTAIN THEMSELVES. THERE HE FINDS OLD B.O.B., THE BATTERED ROBOT WHO USUALLY CARES FOR THE PARTS STORAGE ROOM...
Isn't that ace with the laser guns a S.T.A.R. 782 model? I haven't seen one of that breed since the last arms race!
We just call him S.T.A.R.! He's the prototype for the sentry robots! He used to be Dr. Reinhardt's Number One until Reinhardt built Maximillian!

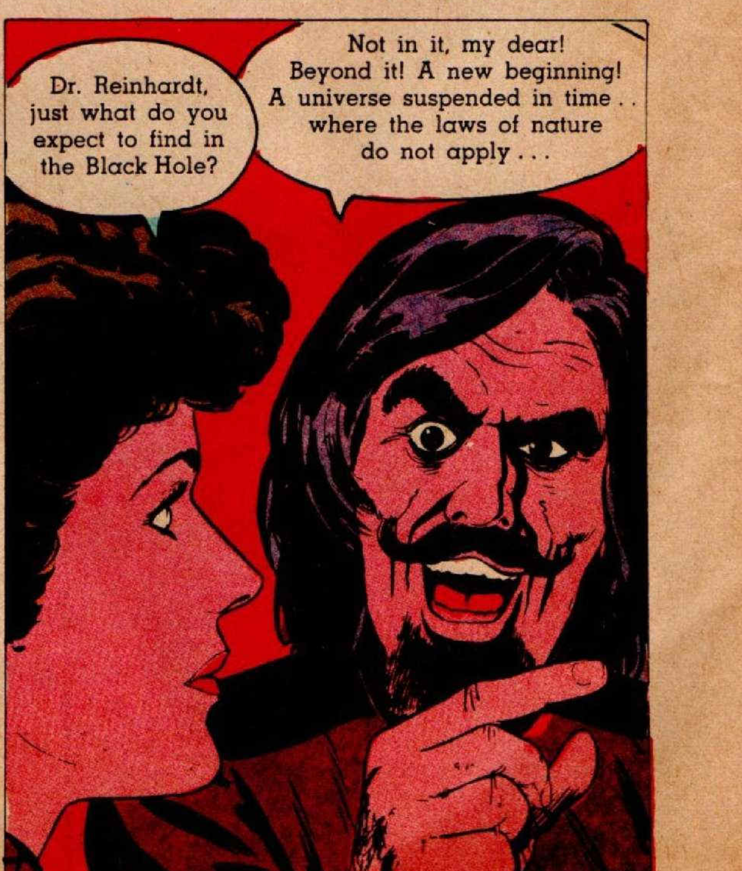

S.T.A.R.'S got a circuit weakness! I used to be able to shoot circles around him . . . only he finally blew a fuse! He did things to me that I don't like to think about!
He did, eh? Hm!
S.T.A.R.! Just a second! V.I.N.CENT.'S my name, and sharpshooting's my game! Care to try me?
WITH THE OTHERS WATCHING, THE SURLY ROBOT CANNOT AVOID THE ENCOUNTER! IN NO TIME V.I.N.CENT. SEEMS A SURE WINNER . . .
S.TAR. 70
V.I.N.CENT. 120
UNTIL S.T.A.R. TRIES THE DIRTY TRICK THAT V.I.N.CENT. HAS BEEN EXPECTING . . .
Aha! So that's the way you play, huh? All right!
CLANK!
V.I.N.CENT. SPINS AND FIRES! HIS LASER BEAM RICOCHETS UNTIL IT ZAPS OFF S.T.A.R.'S CHEST AND SENDS HIS SHARPSHOOTER'S MEDAL FLYING.
CLINK!
V.I.N.CENT. AND OLD B.O.B. FLEE AND TAKE REFUGE IN AN AREA OF THE CYGNUS WHICH V.I.N.CENT. HAS NOT SEEN BEFORE . . .
THE DEFEAT AND HUMILIATION ARE TOO MUCH FOR S.T.A.R.! HIS CIRCUITS OVERHEAT! SMOKE SEEPS FROM HIS JOINTS . . .
V.I.N.CENT., there's something you'd better know about this ship! Your friends could be in *TERRIBLE DANGER!*

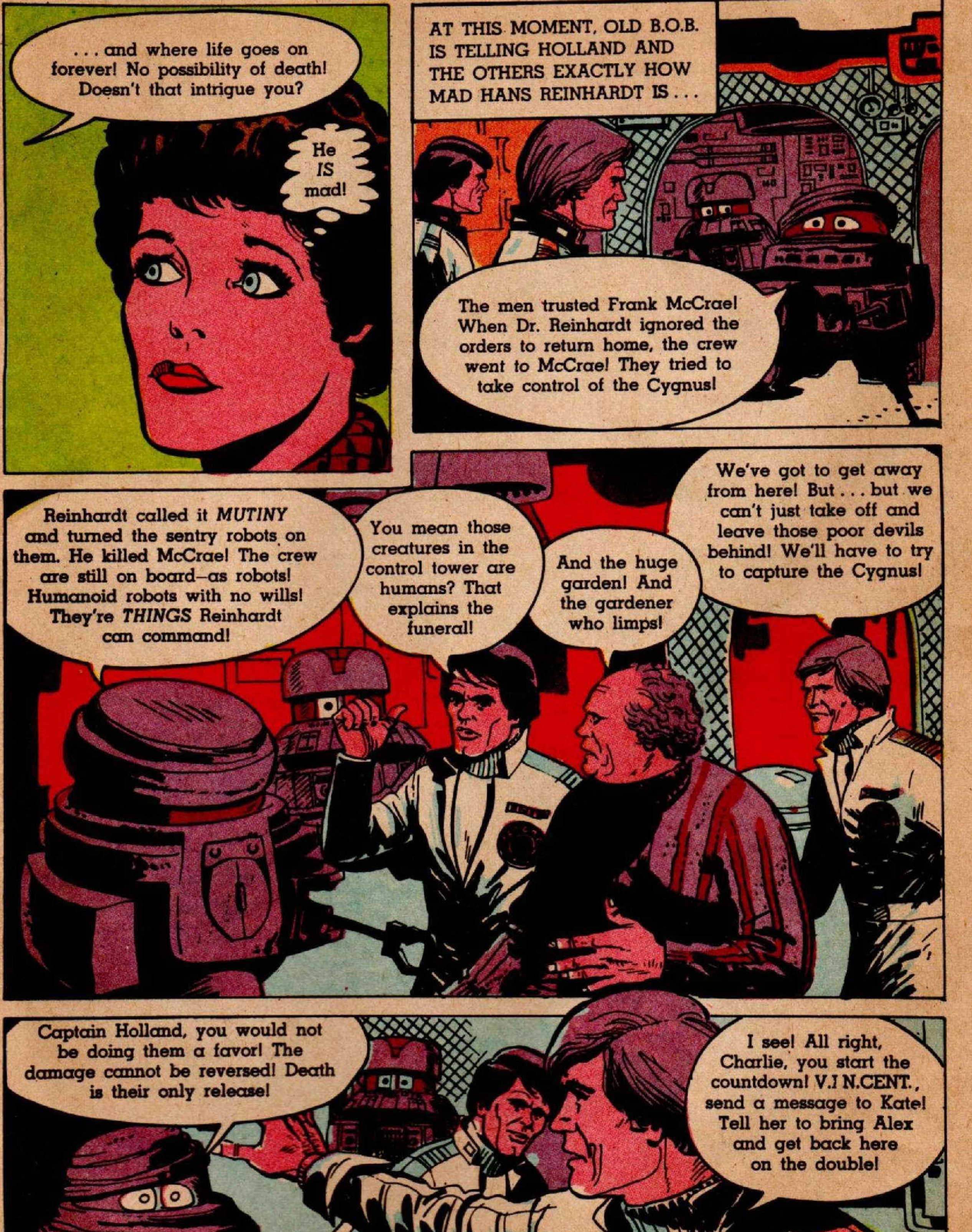

This is the medical corridor, and that's an operating table! See those poor creatures there? They're what's left of the *CREW* . . . kept alive electronically!
You mean they're *HUMANS?*

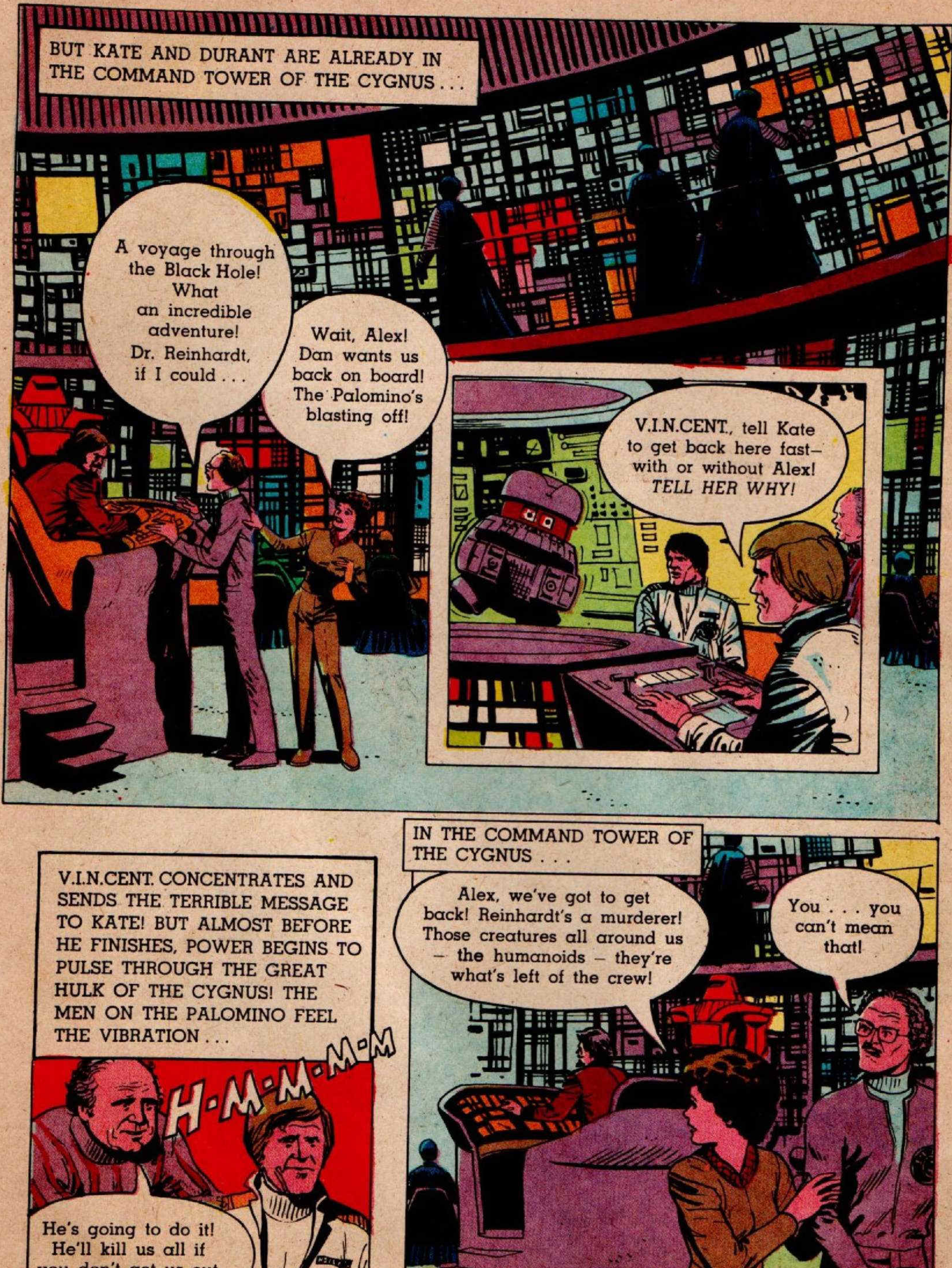

More robot than human, V.I.N.CENT.! Their brains have been altered! They can react to nothing except the tasks Reinhardt assigns to them! They are remarkably efficient! They see and hear nothing except their duties!

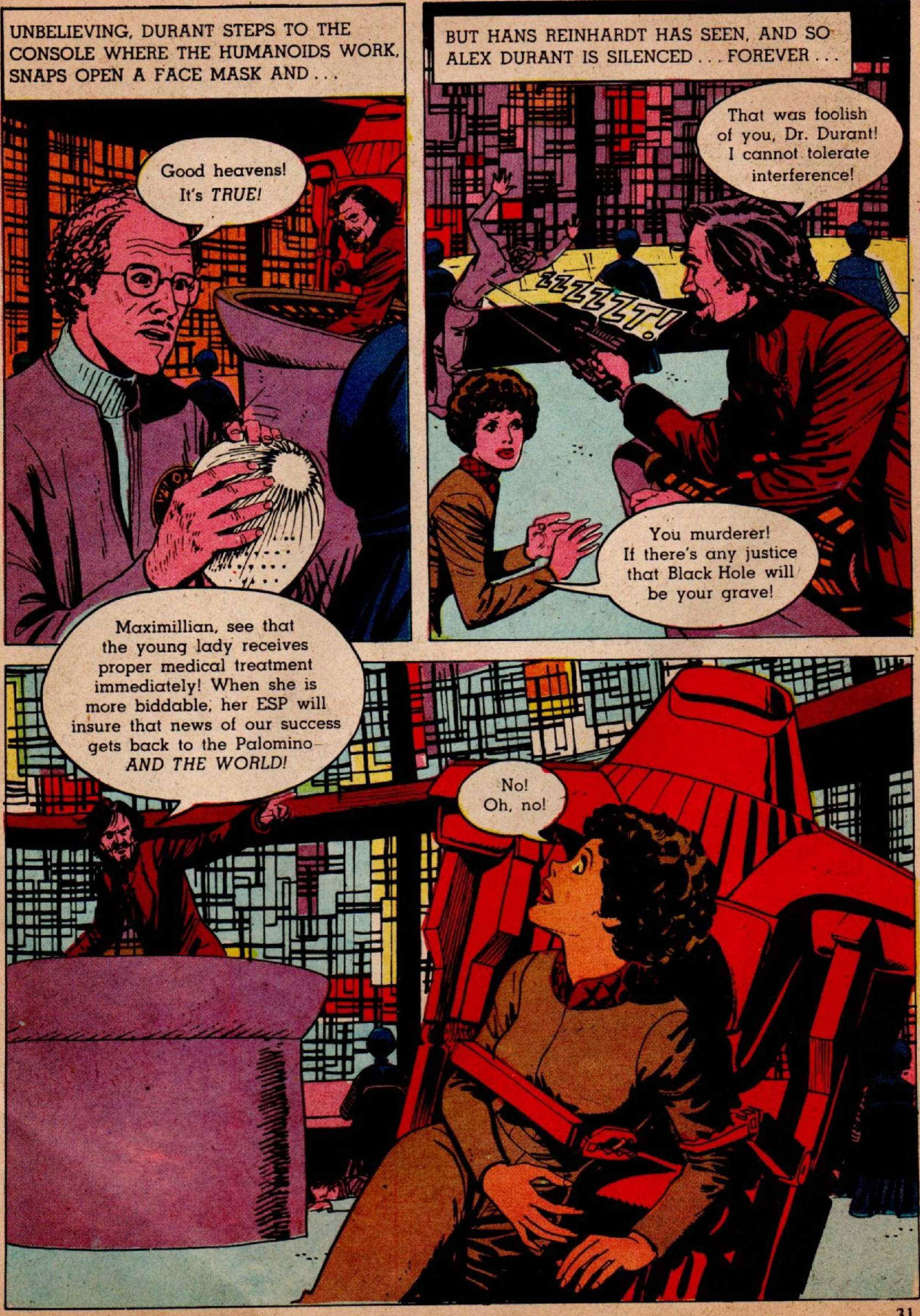

MEANWHILE, IN THE DINING AREA OF THE CYGNUS . . .
Is Reinhardt a genius? Or is he insane? There's something so strange about this ship! That robot funeral I saw!
And a garden big enough to feed an army . . . but it feeds only one man!
Dan! I'm getting a telepathic message from V.I.N.CENT.! He wants you to meet him aboard the Palomino right away!

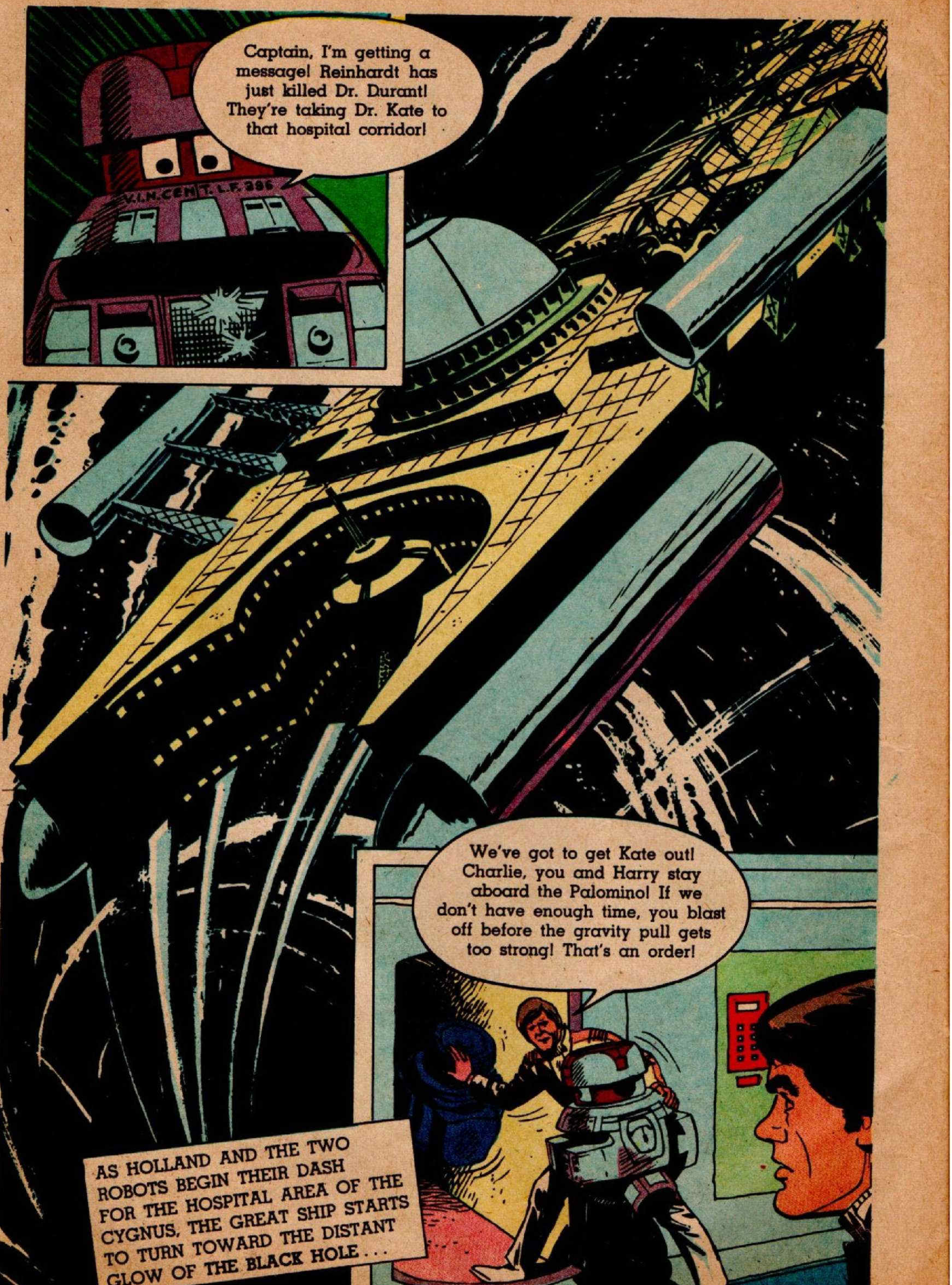

HOLLAND HURRIES TO RESPOND TO V.I.N.CENT.'S SUMMONS, TAKING PIZER AND BOOTH WITH HIM. WHEN REINHARDT RETURNS TO THE DINING ROOM, ONLY KATE AND DURANT ARE WAITING, WATCHING THE BLACK HOLE . . .
Where are the others?
Called back to our ship! V.I.N.CENT. sent a message . . by telepathy! Some problem with the Palomino, I suppose!

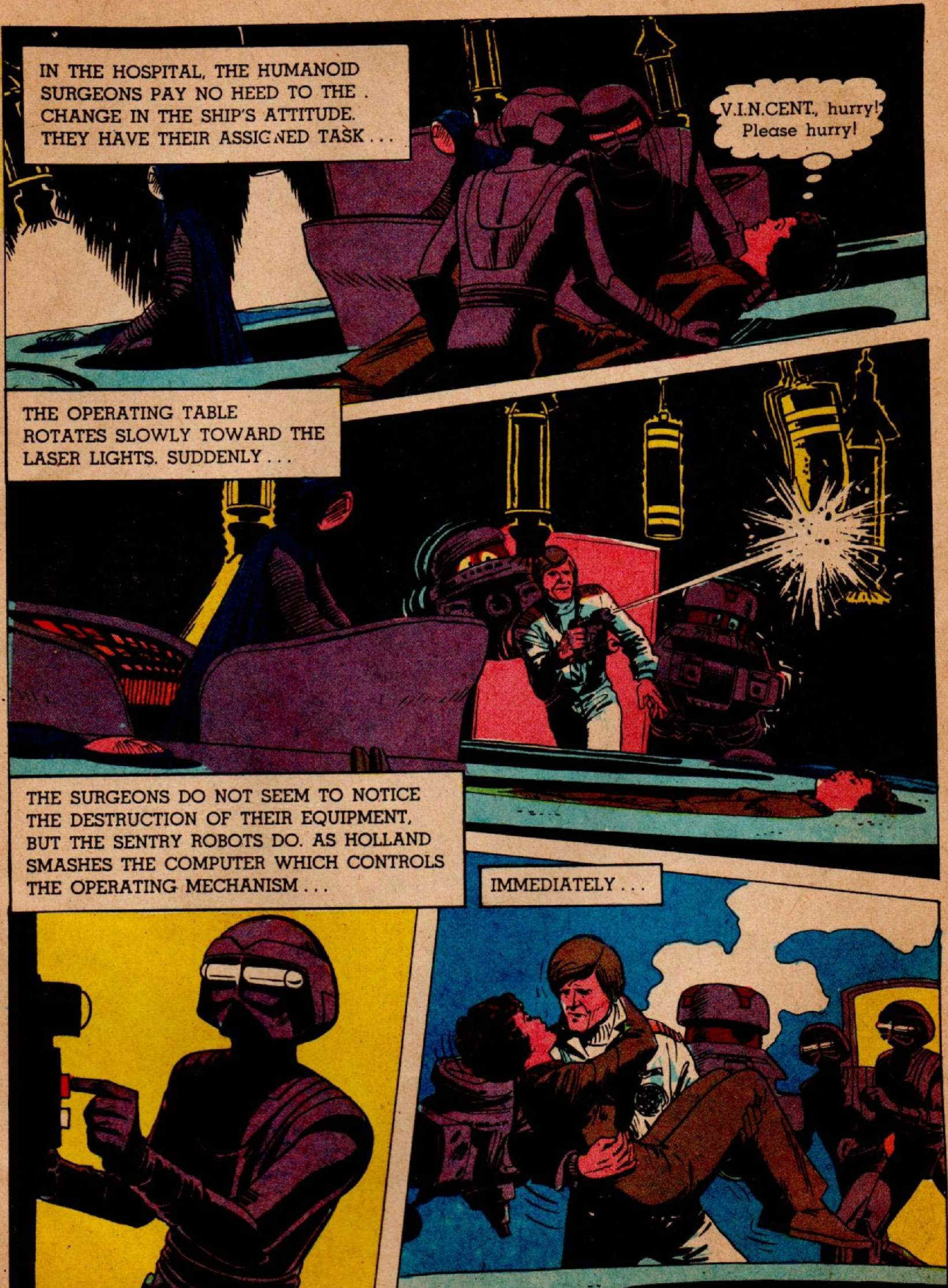

Dr. Reinhardt, just what do you expect to find in the Black Hole?
Not in it, my dear! Beyond it! A new beginning! A universe suspended in time . . where the laws of nature do not apply . . .

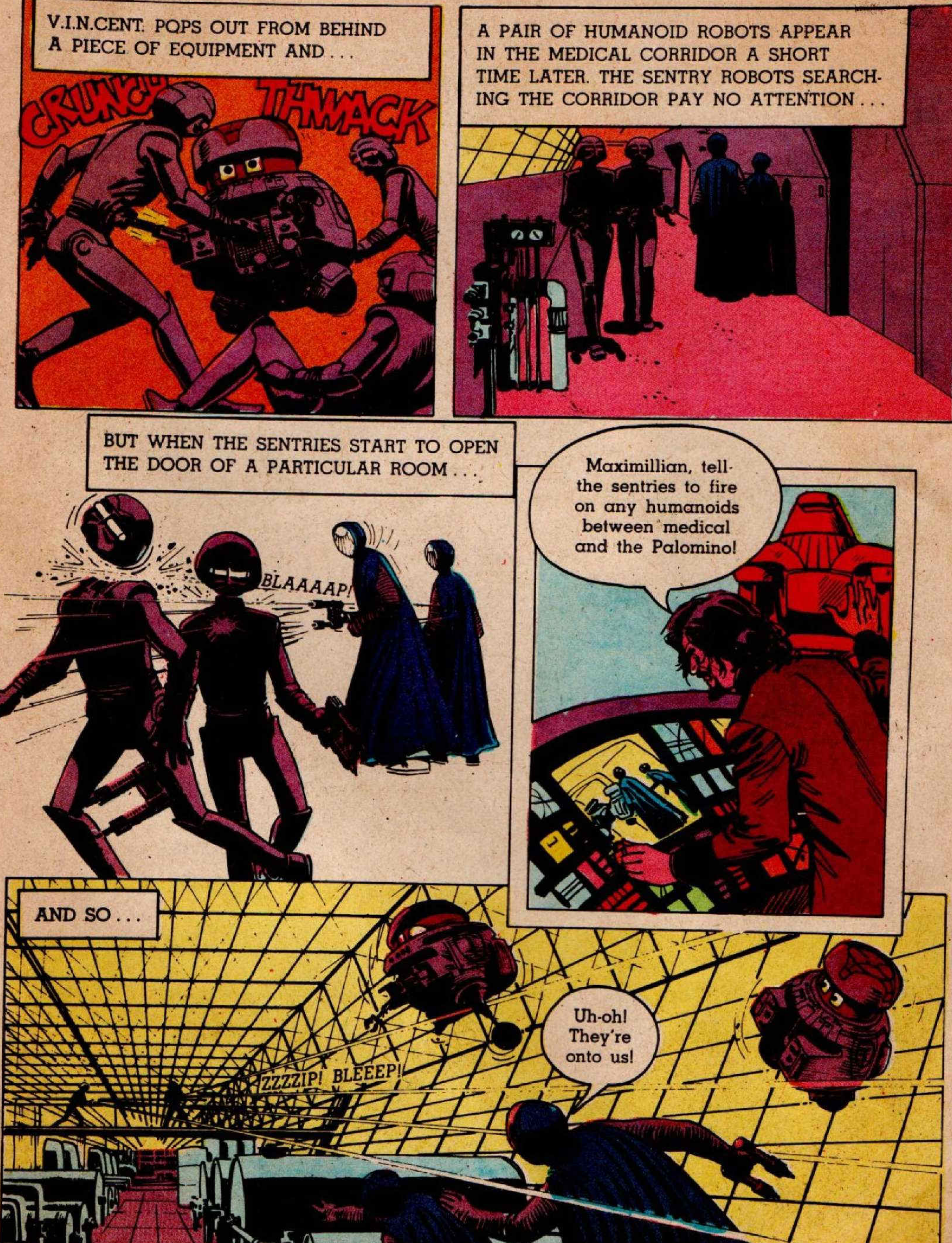

. . . and where life goes on forever! No possibility of death! Doesn't that intrigue you?
He *IS* mad!
AT THIS MOMENT, OLD B.O.B. IS TELLING HOLLAND AND THE OTHERS EXACTLY HOW MAD HANS REINHARDT IS . . .
The men trusted Frank McCrae! When Dr. Reinhardt ignored the orders to return home, the crew went to McCrae! They tried to take control of the Cygnus!
Reinhardt called it *MUTINY* and turned the sentry robots on them. He killed McCrae! The crew are still on board—as robots! Humanoid robots with no wills! They're *THINGS* Reinhardt can command!
You mean those creatures in the control tower are humans? That explains the funeral!
And the huge garden! And the gardener who limps!
We've got to get away from here! But . . . but we can't just take off and leave those poor devils behind! We'll have to try to capture the Cygnus!
Captain Holland, you would not be doing them a favor! The damage cannot be reversed! Death is their only release!
I see! All right, Charlie, you start the countdown! V.I.N.CENT., send a message to Kate! Tell her to bring Alex and get back here on the double!
HOLLAND

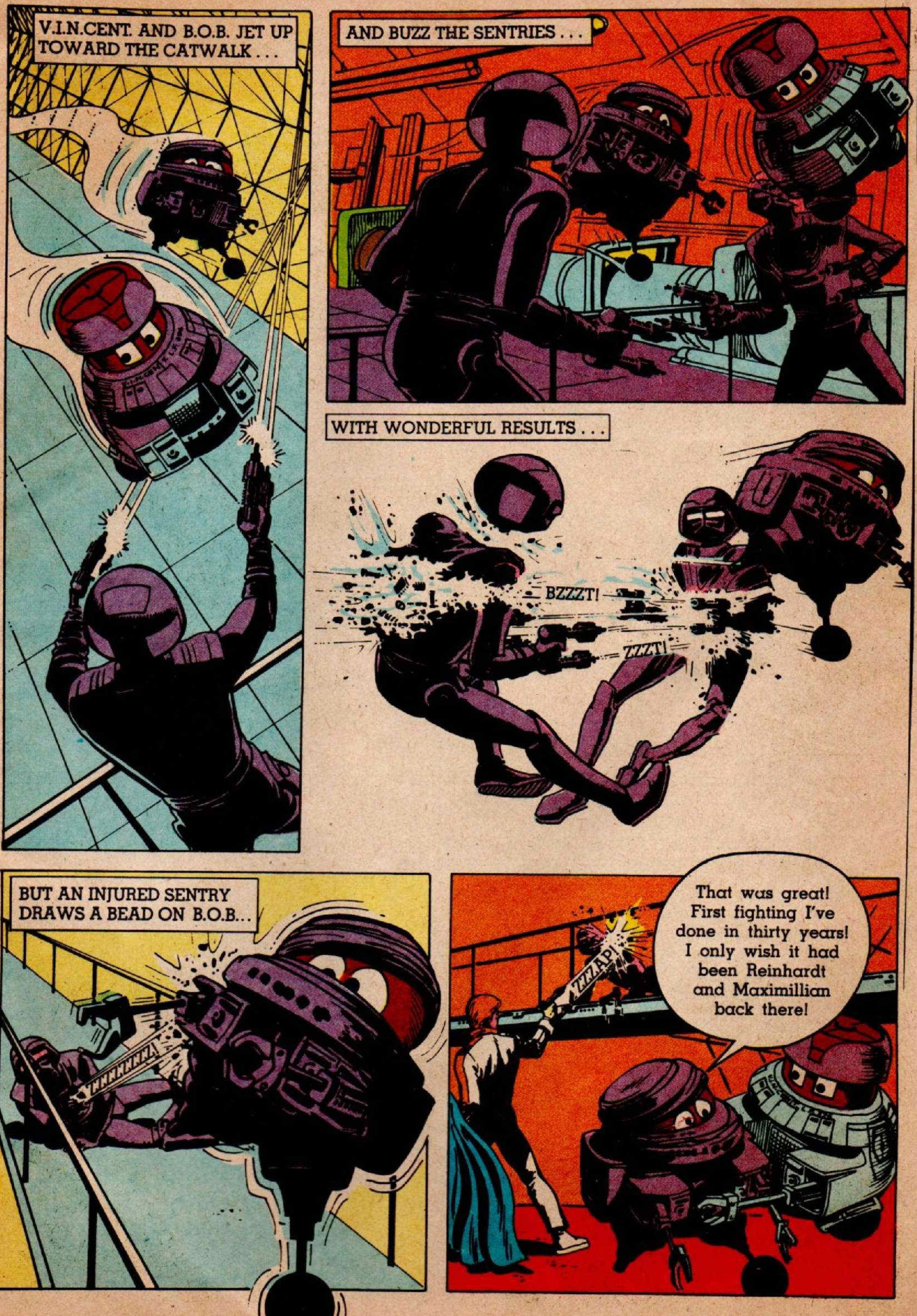

BUT KATE AND DURANT ARE ALREADY IN THE COMMAND TOWER OF THE CYGNUS . . .
A voyage through the Black Hole! What an incredible adventure! Dr. Reinhardt, if I could . . .
Wait, Alex! Dan wants us back on board! The Palomino's blasting off!
V.I.N.CENT., tell Kate to get back here fast– with or without Alex! *TELL HER WHY!*
V.I.N.CENT. CONCENTRATES AND SENDS THE TERRIBLE MESSAGE TO KATE! BUT ALMOST BEFORE HE FINISHES, POWER BEGINS TO PULSE THROUGH THE GREAT HULK OF THE CYGNUS! THE MEN ON THE PALOMINO FEEL THE VIBRATION . . .
H-M-M-M-M-M
He's going to do it! He'll kill us all if you don't get us out of here right now!
IN THE COMMAND TOWER OF THE CYGNUS . . .
Alex, we've got to get back! Reinhardt's a murderer! Those creatures all around us – the humanoids – they're what's left of the crew!
You . . . you can't mean that!


UNBELIEVING, DURANT STEPS TO THE CONSOLE WHERE THE HUMANOIDS WORK, SNAPS OPEN A FACE MASK AND . . .
Good heavens! It's *TRUE!*
BUT HANS REINHARDT HAS SEEN, AND SO ALEX DURANT IS SILENCED . . . FOREVER . . .
That was foolish of you, Dr. Durant! I cannot tolerate interference!
ZZZZZT!
You murderer! If there's any justice that Black Hole will be your grave!
Maximillian, see that the young lady receives proper medical treatment immediately! When she is more biddable, her ESP will insure that news of our success gets back to the Palomino— *AND THE WORLD!*
No! Oh, no!

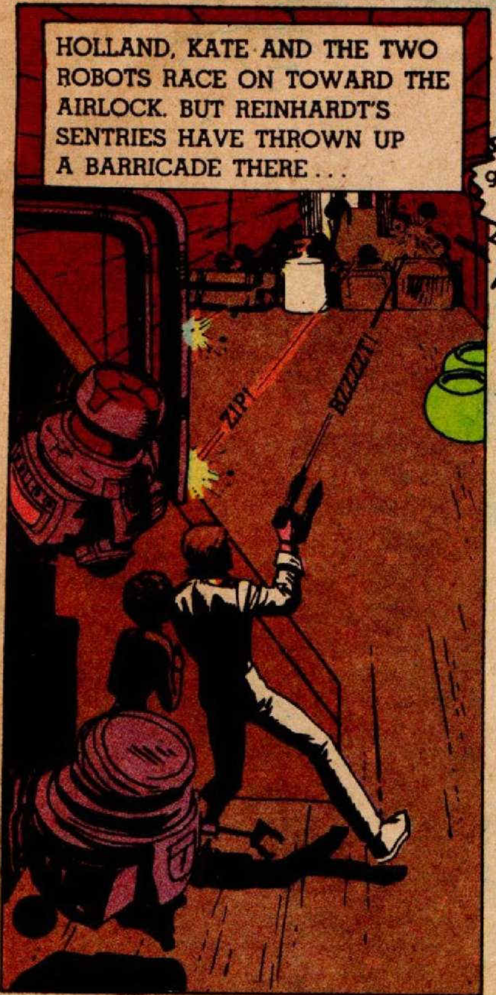

Captain, I'm getting a message! Reinhardt has just killed Dr. Durant! They're taking Dr. Kate to that hospital corridor!
V.I.N.CENT. L.F. 396
We've got to get Kate out! Charlie, you and Harry stay aboard the Palomino! If we don't have enough time, you blast off before the gravity pull gets too strong! That's an order!
AS HOLLAND AND THE TWO ROBOTS BEGIN THEIR DASH FOR THE HOSPITAL AREA OF THE CYGNUS, THE GREAT SHIP STARTS TO TURN TOWARD THE DISTANT GLOW OF THE BLACK HOLE . . .


IN THE HOSPITAL, THE HUMANOID SURGEONS PAY NO HEED TO THE CHANGE IN THE SHIP'S ATTITUDE. THEY HAVE THEIR ASSIGNED TASK . . .
V.I.N.CENT., hurry! Please hurry!
THE OPERATING TABLE ROTATES SLOWLY TOWARD THE LASER LIGHTS. SUDDENLY . . .
THE SURGEONS DO NOT SEEM TO NOTICE THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR EQUIPMENT, BUT THE SENTRY ROBOTS DO. AS HOLLAND SMASHES THE COMPUTER WHICH CONTROLS THE OPERATING MECHANISM . . .
IMMEDIATELY . . .

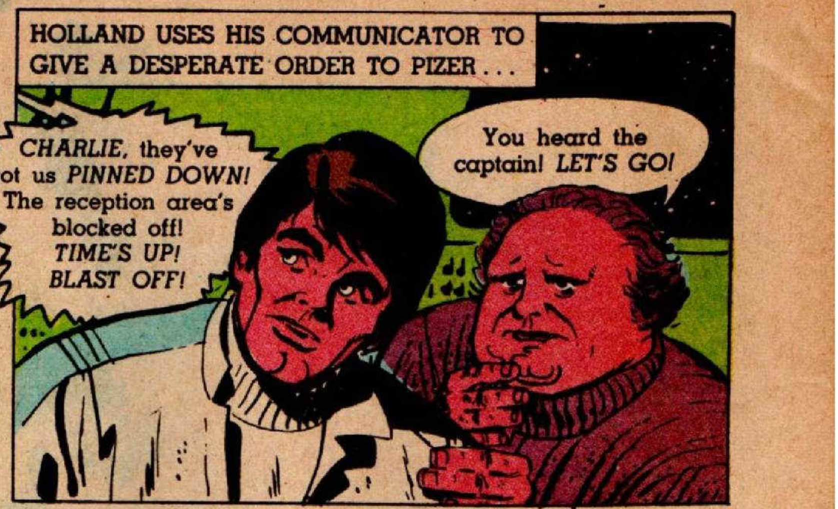

V.I.N.CENT. POPS OUT FROM BEHIND A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT AND . . .
CRUNCH
THWACK
A PAIR OF HUMANOID ROBOTS APPEAR IN THE MEDICAL CORRIDOR A SHORT TIME LATER. THE SENTRY ROBOTS SEARCHING THE CORRIDOR PAY NO ATTENTION . . .
BUT WHEN THE SENTRIES START TO OPEN THE DOOR OF A PARTICULAR ROOM . . .
BLAAAAP!
Maximillian, tell the sentries to fire on any humanoids between medical and the Palomino!
AND SO . . .
ZZZZIP! BLEEEP!
Uh-oh! They're onto us!


V.I.N.CENT. AND B.O.B. JET UP TOWARD THE CATWALK . . .
AND BUZZ THE SENTRIES . . .
WITH WONDERFUL RESULTS . . .
BZZZT!
ZZZZT!
BUT AN INJURED SENTRY DRAWS A BEAD ON B.O.B...
ZZZAP!
That was great! First fighting I've done in thirty years! I only wish it had been Reinhardt and Maximillian back there!

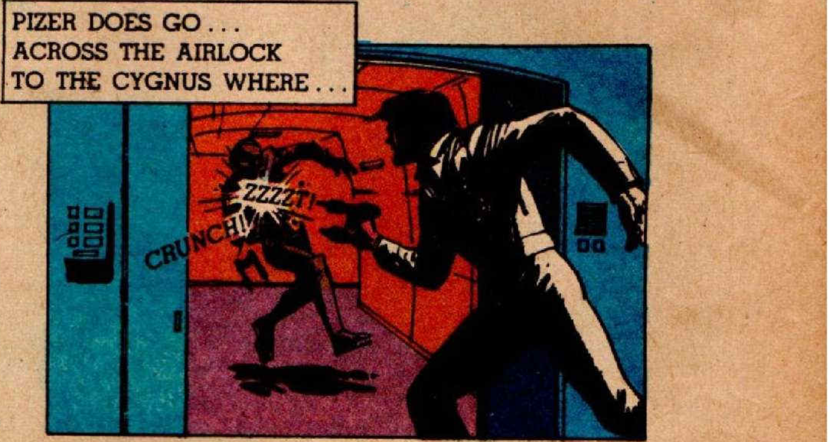
HOLLAND, KATE AND THE TWO ROBOTS RACE ON TOWARD THE AIRLOCK. BUT REINHARDT'S SENTRIES HAVE THROWN UP A BARRICADE THERE . . .



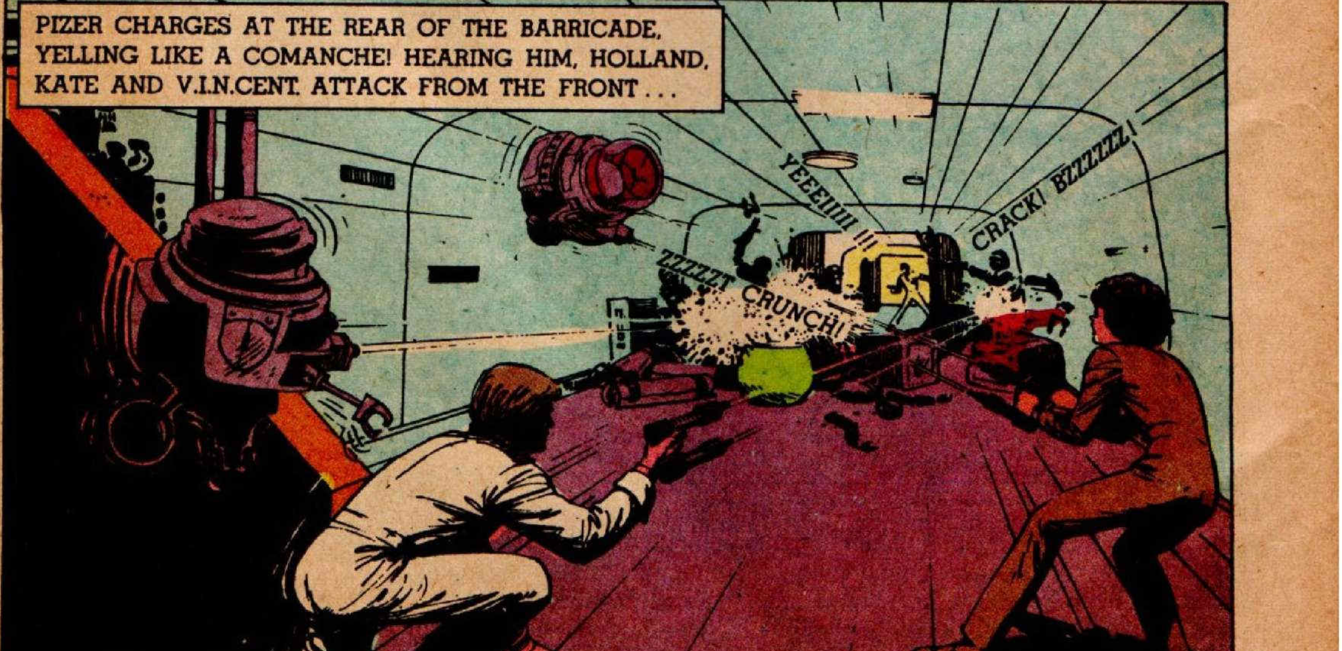
HOLLAND USES HIS COMMUNICATOR TO GIVE A DESPERATE ORDER TO PIZER . . .

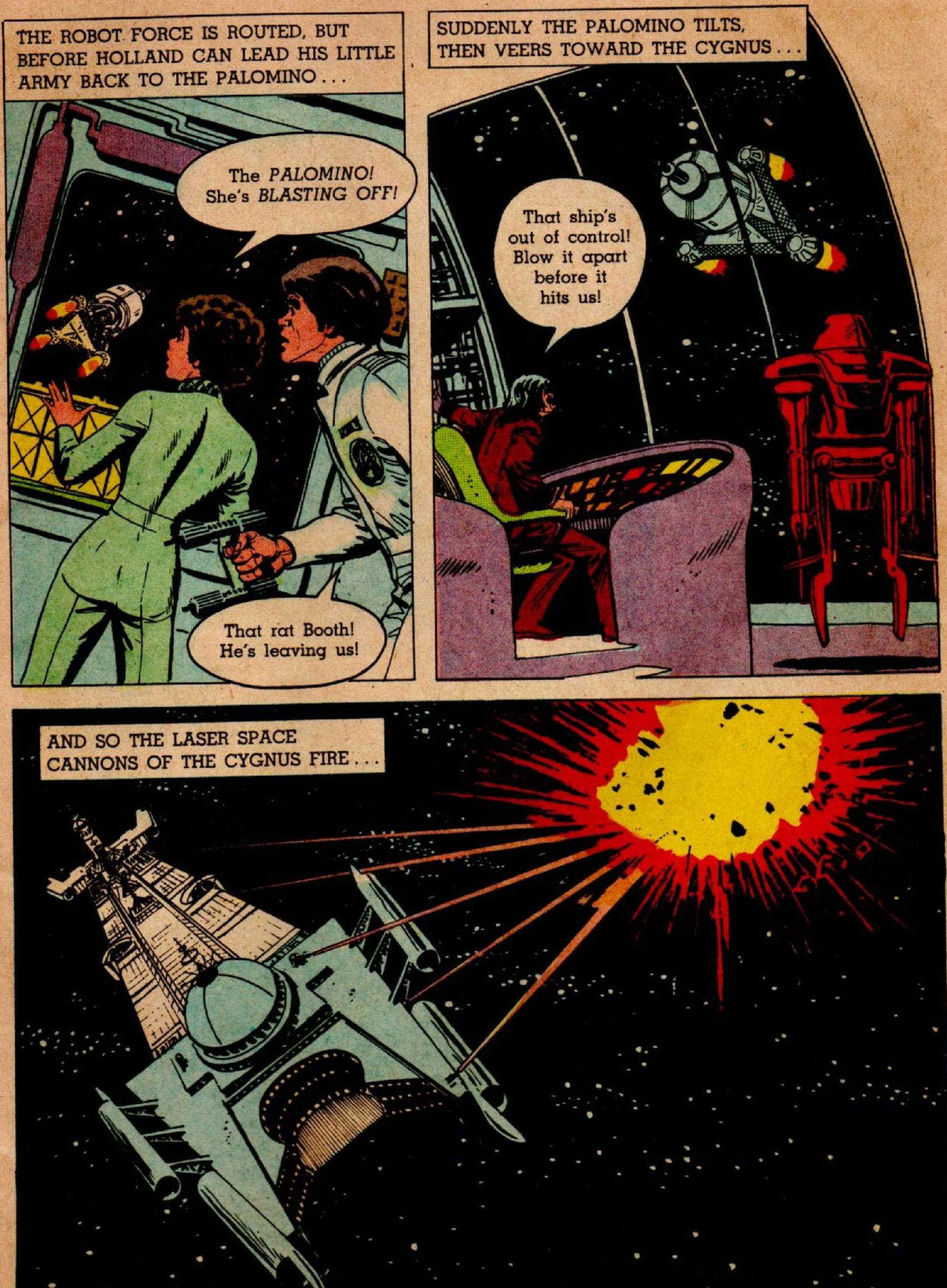

CHARLIE, they've got us *PINNED DOWN!* The reception area's blocked off! *TIME'S UP! BLAST OFF!*
You heard the captain! *LET'S GO!*

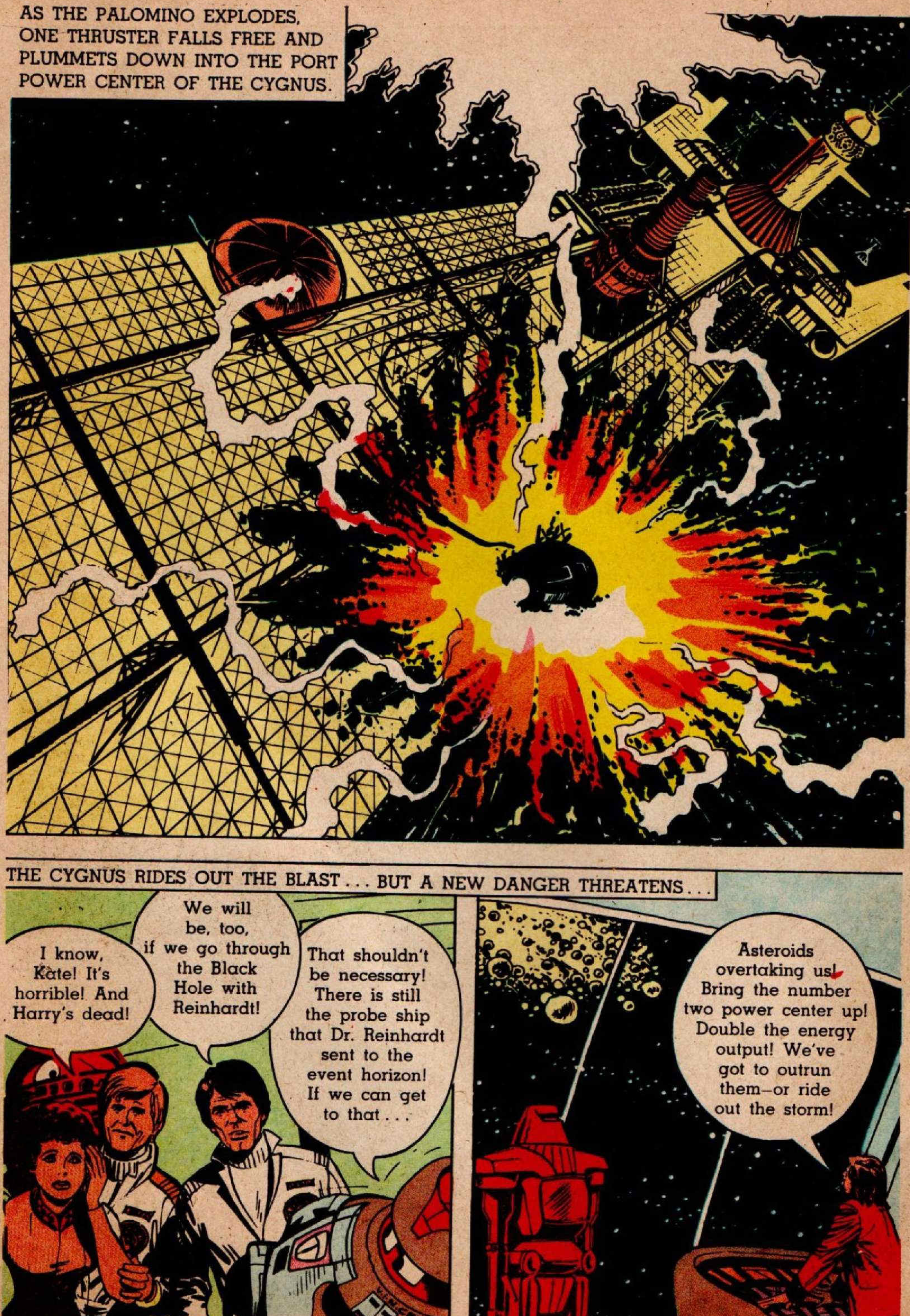
PIZER DOES GO . . .
ACROSS THE AIRLOCK
TO THE CYGNUS WHERE . . .

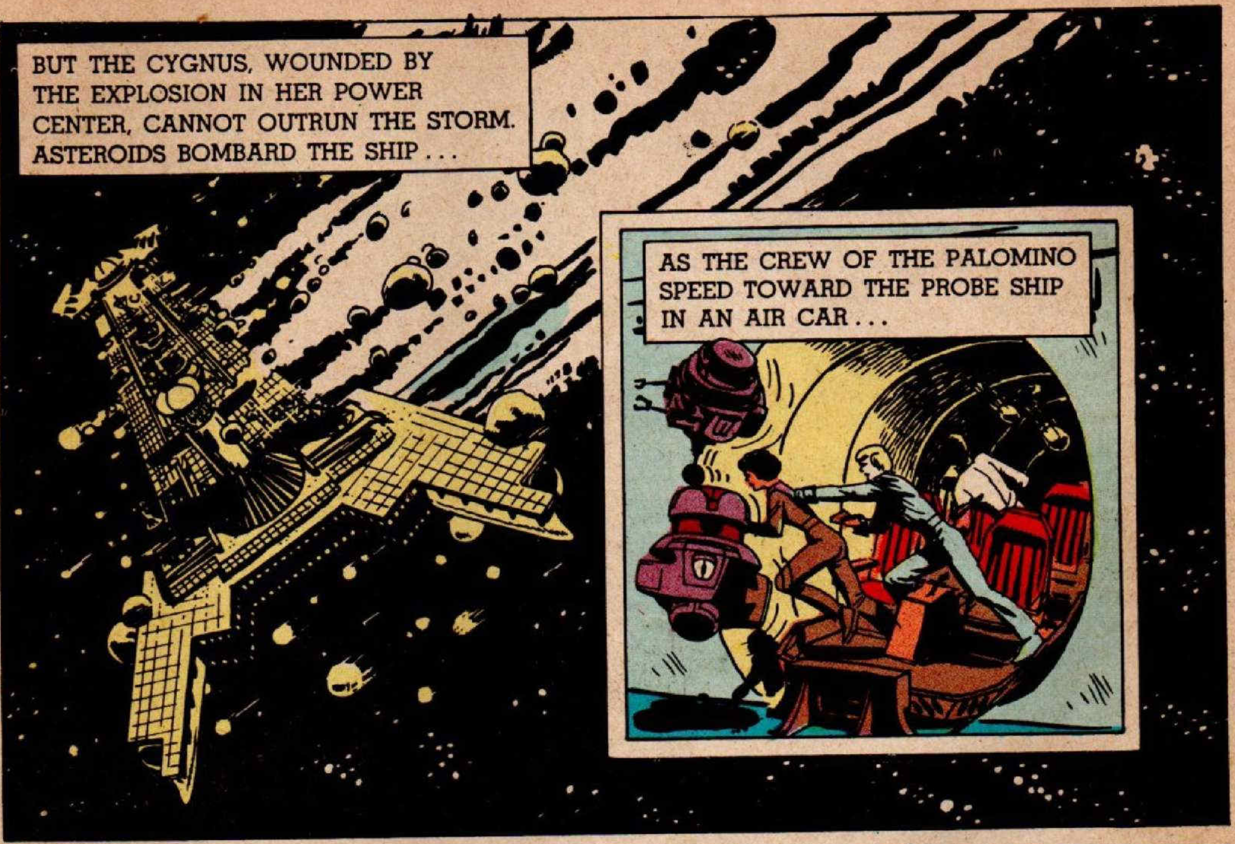

ZZZZT!
CRUNCH!

PIZER CHARGES AT THE REAR OF THE BARRICADE, YELLING LIKE A COMANCHE! HEARING HIM, HOLLAND, KATE AND V.I.N.CENT. ATTACK FROM THE FRONT . . .


YEEEIIIII!
ZZZZZT
CRUNCH!
CRACK!
BZZZZZZ!

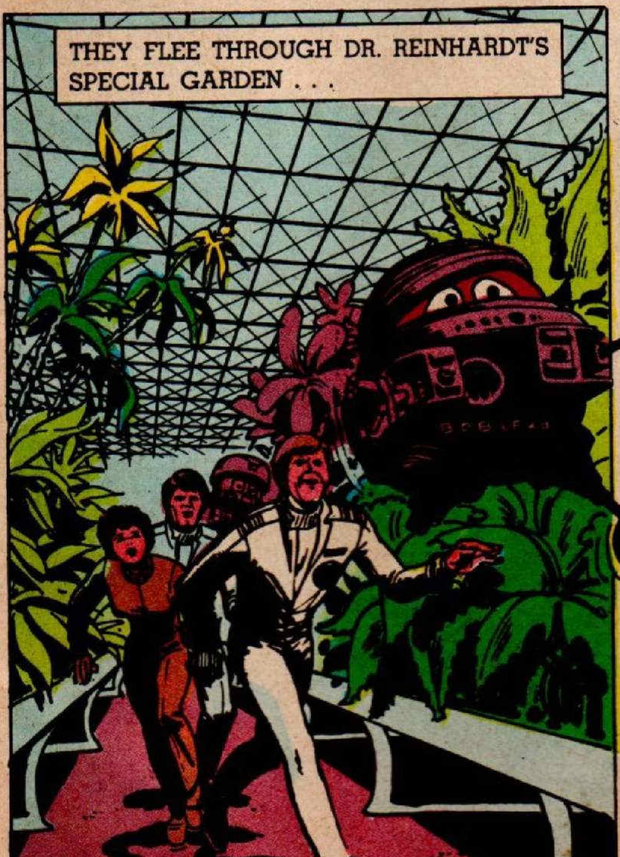

THE ROBOT FORCE IS ROUTED, BUT BEFORE HOLLAND CAN LEAD HIS LITTLE ARMY BACK TO THE PALOMINO . . .
The *PALOMINO!* She's *BLASTING OFF!*
That rat Booth! He's leaving us!
SUDDENLY THE PALOMINO TILTS, THEN VEERS TOWARD THE CYGNUS . . .
That ship's out of control! Blow it apart before it hits us!
AND SO THE LASER SPACE CANNONS OF THE CYGNUS FIRE . . .


AS THE PALOMINO EXPLODES, ONE THRUSTER FALLS FREE AND PLUMMETS DOWN INTO THE PORT POWER CENTER OF THE CYGNUS.
THE CYGNUS RIDES OUT THE BLAST . . . BUT A NEW DANGER THREATENS . . .
I know, Kate! It's horrible! And Harry's dead!
We will be, too, if we go through the Black Hole with Reinhardt!
That shouldn't be necessary! There is still the probe ship that Dr. Reinhardt sent to the event horizon! If we can get to that . . .
Asteroids overtaking us! Bring the number two power center up! Double the energy output! We've got to outrun them—or ride out the storm!

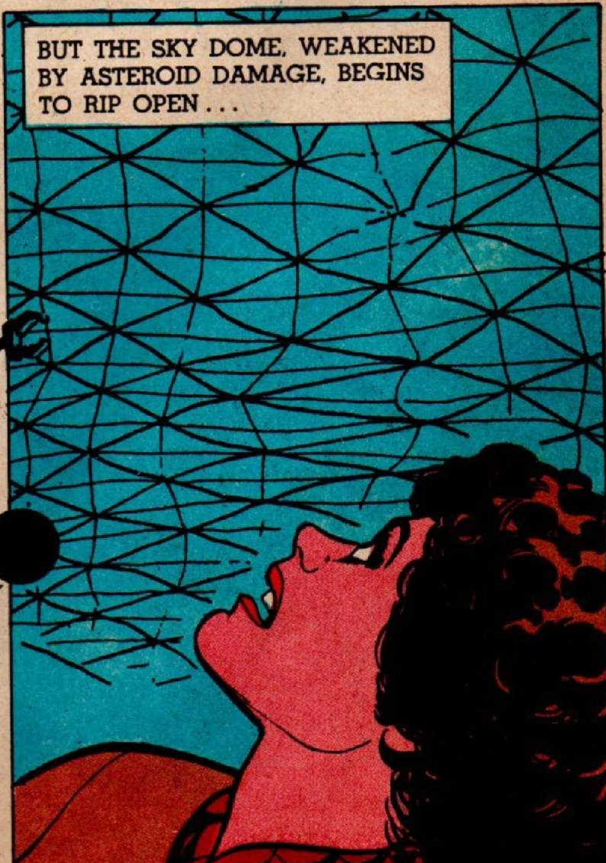


BUT THE CYGNUS, WOUNDED BY THE EXPLOSION IN HER POWER CENTER, CANNOT OUTRUN THE STORM. ASTEROIDS BOMBARD THE SHIP . . .

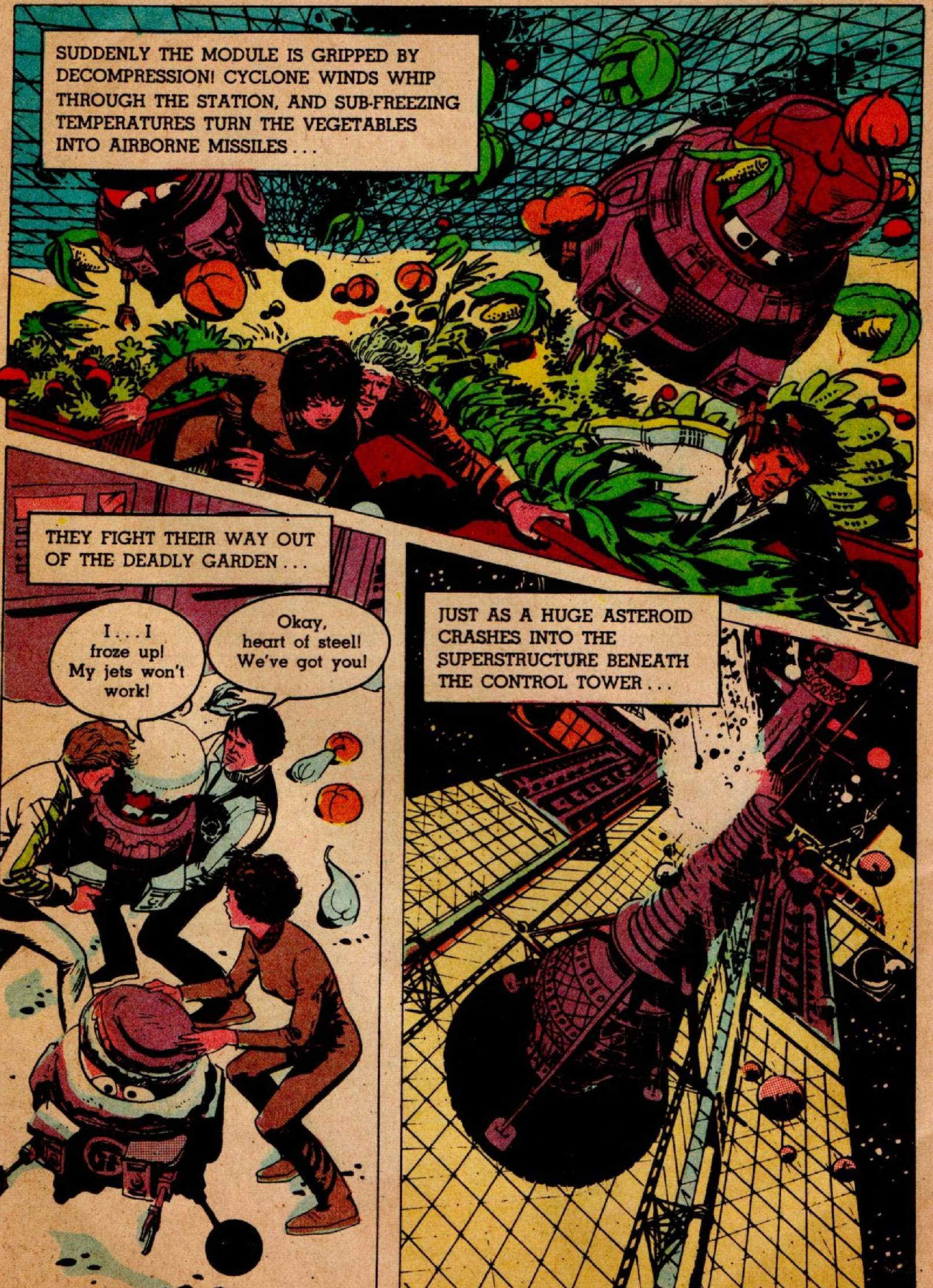
AS THE CREW OF THE PALOMINO SPEED TOWARD THE PROBE SHIP IN AN AIR CAR . . .

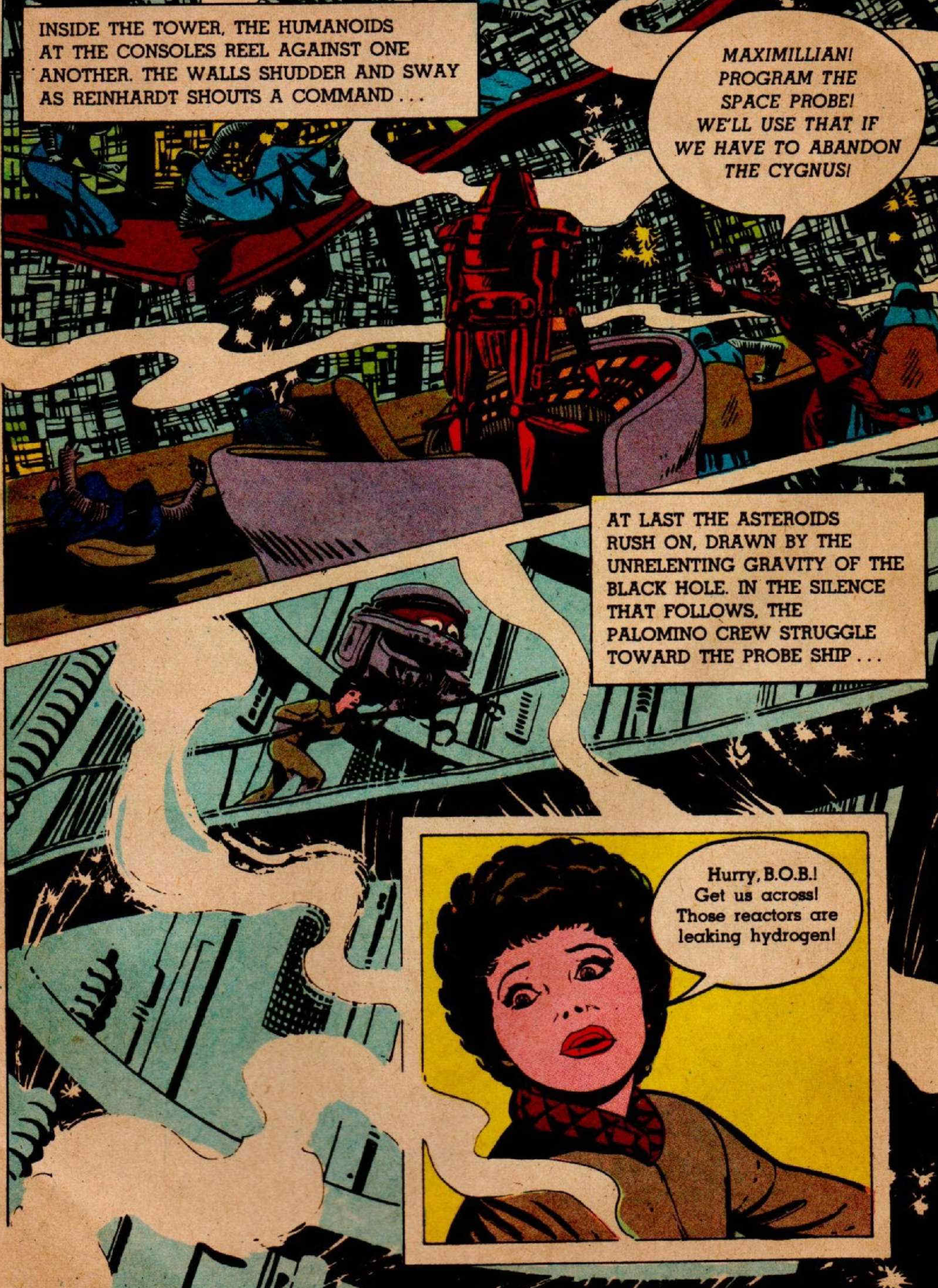


THEY FLEE THROUGH DR. REINHARDT'S SPECIAL GARDEN . . .



BUT THE SKY DOME, WEAKENED BY ASTEROID DAMAGE, BEGINS TO RIP OPEN . . .


SUDDENLY THE MODULE IS GRIPPED BY DECOMPRESSION! CYCLONE WINDS WHIP THROUGH THE STATION, AND SUB-FREEZING TEMPERATURES TURN THE VEGETABLES INTO AIRBORNE MISSILES . . .
THEY FIGHT THEIR WAY OUT OF THE DEADLY GARDEN . . .
I . . . I froze up! My jets won't work!
Okay, heart of steel! We've got you!
JUST AS A HUGE ASTEROID CRASHES INTO THE SUPERSTRUCTURE BENEATH THE CONTROL TOWER . . .

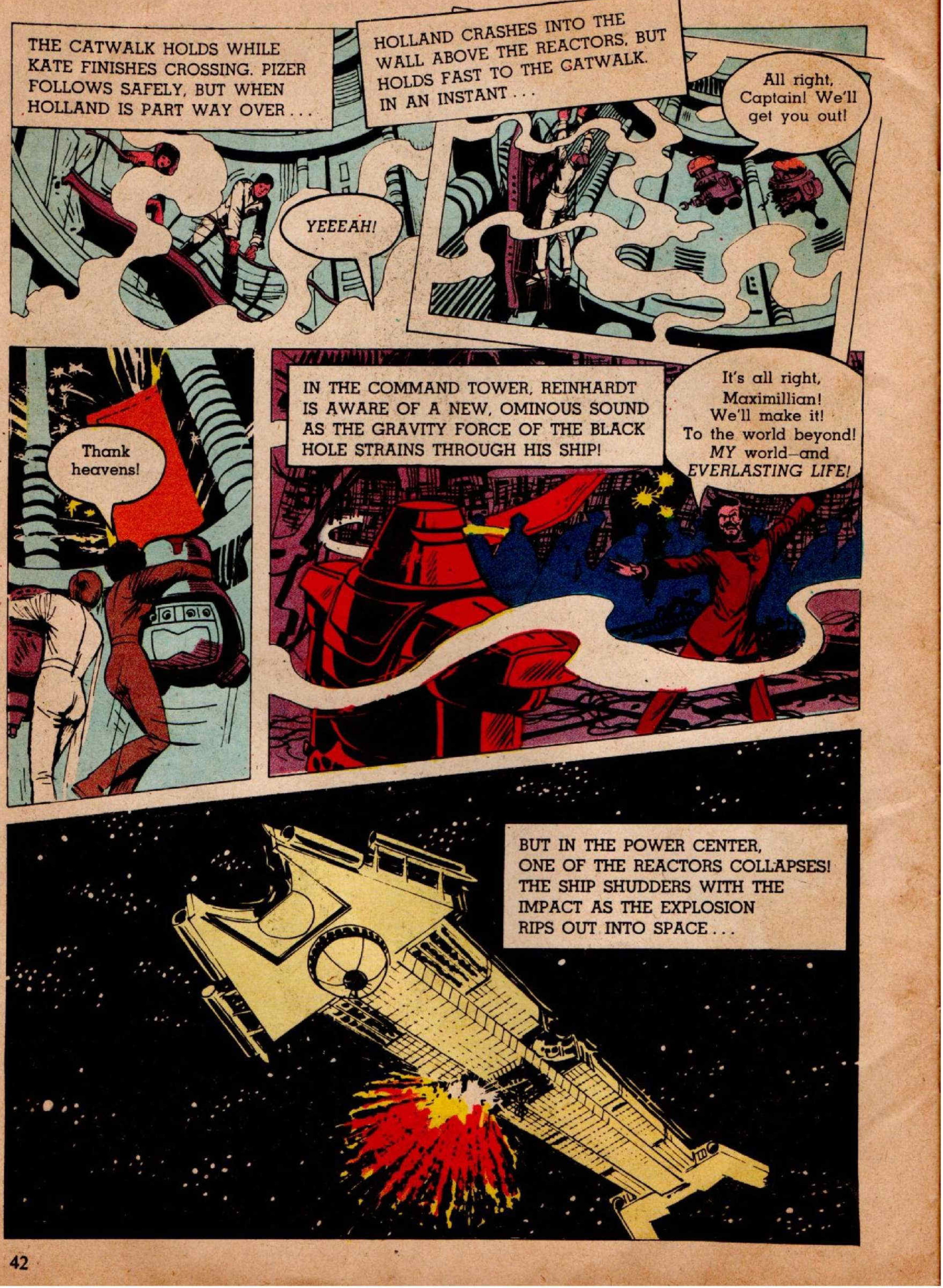


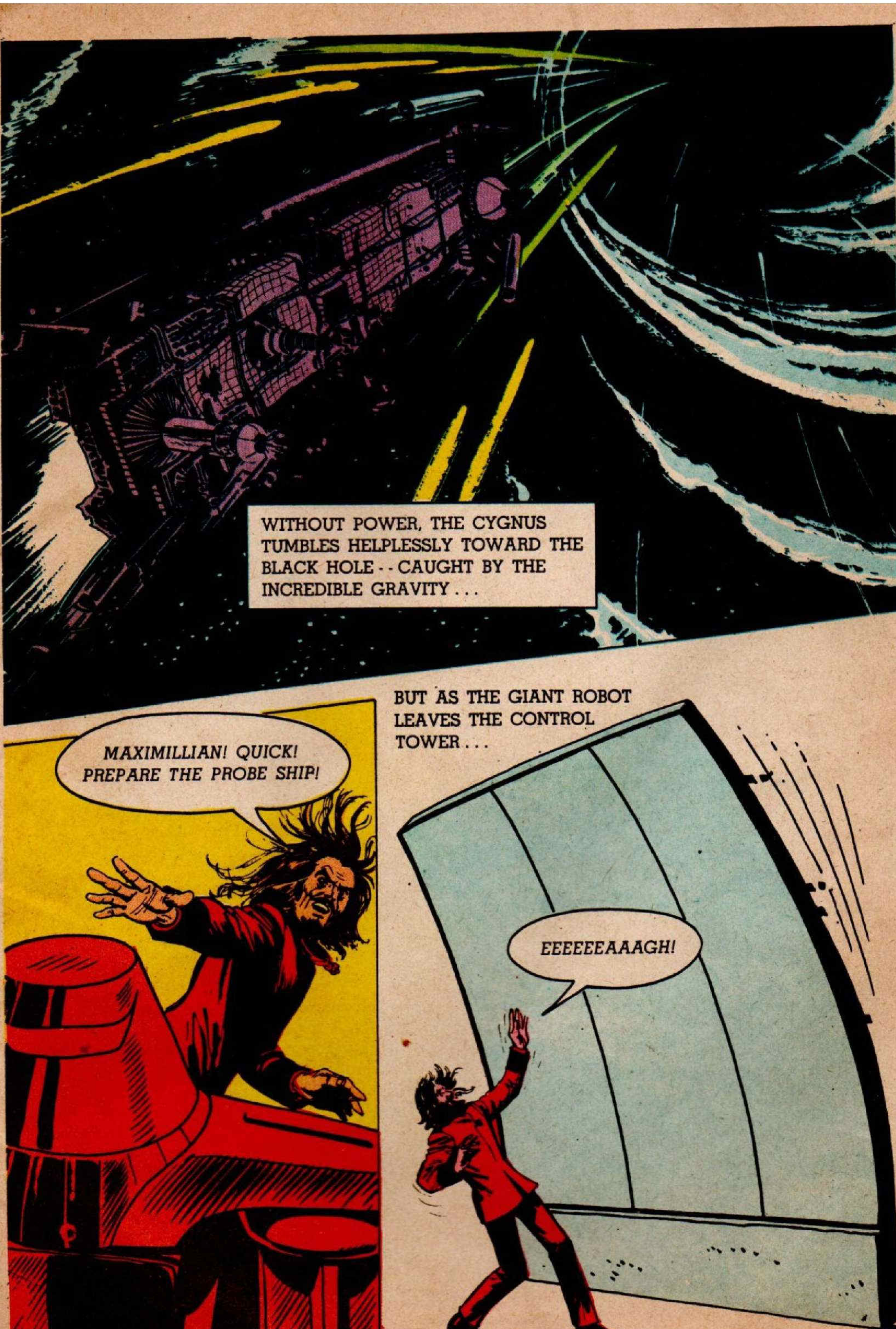
INSIDE THE TOWER, THE HUMANOIDS AT THE CONSOLES REEL AGAINST ONE ANOTHER. THE WALLS SHUDDER AND SWAY AS REINHARDT SHOUTS A COMMAND . . .

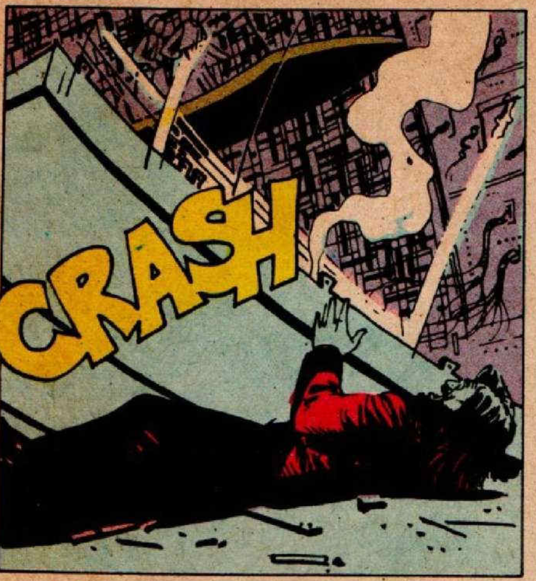
MAXIMILLIAN! PROGRAM THE SPACE PROBE! WE'LL USE THAT IF WE HAVE TO ABANDON THE CYGNUS!

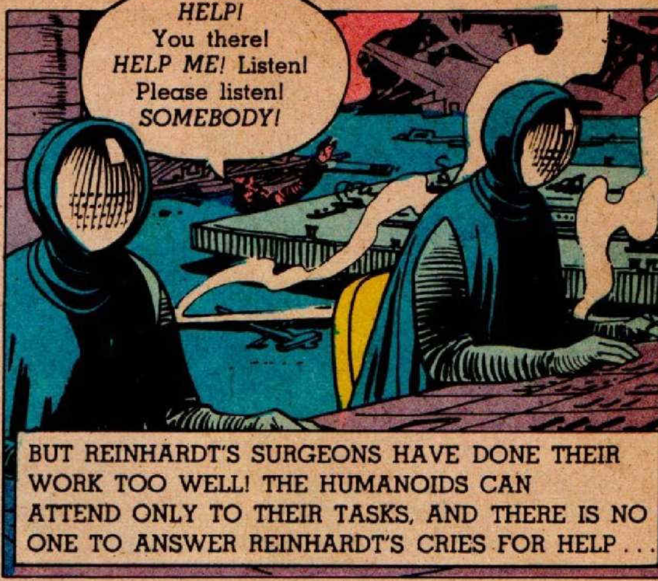
AT LAST THE ASTEROIDS RUSH ON, DRAWN BY THE UNRELENTING GRAVITY OF THE BLACK HOLE. IN THE SILENCE THAT FOLLOWS, THE PALOMINO CREW STRUGGLE TOWARD THE PROBE SHIP . . .

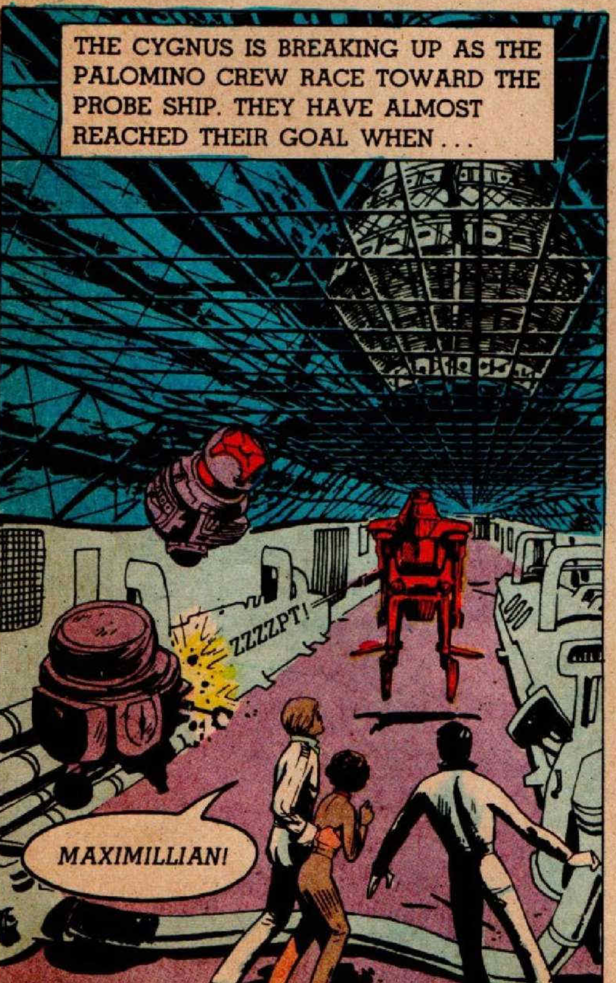
Hurry, B.O.B.! Get us across! Those reactors are leaking hydrogen!

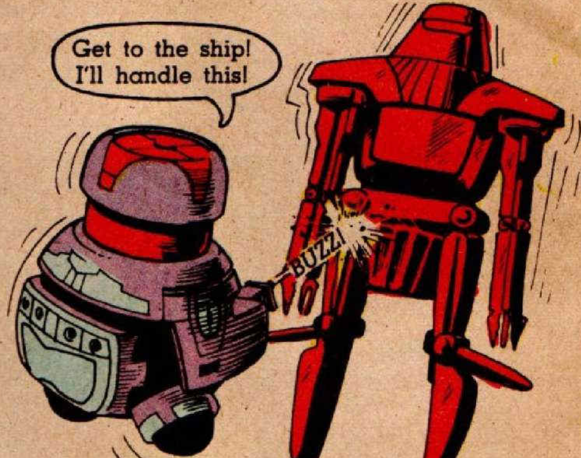

THE CATWALK HOLDS WHILE KATE FINISHES CROSSING. PIZER FOLLOWS SAFELY, BUT WHEN HOLLAND IS PART WAY OVER . . .
YEEEAH!
HOLLAND CRASHES INTO THE WALL ABOVE THE REACTORS, BUT HOLDS FAST TO THE CATWALK. IN AN INSTANT . . .
All right, Captain! We'll get you out!
Thank heavens!
IN THE COMMAND TOWER, REINHARDT IS AWARE OF A NEW, OMINOUS SOUND AS THE GRAVITY FORCE OF THE BLACK HOLE STRAINS THROUGH HIS SHIP!
It's all right, Maximillian! We'll make it! To the world beyond! *MY* world—and *EVERLASTING LIFE!*
BUT IN THE POWER CENTER, ONE OF THE REACTORS COLLAPSES! THE SHIP SHUDDERS WITH THE IMPACT AS THE EXPLOSION RIPS OUT INTO SPACE . . .

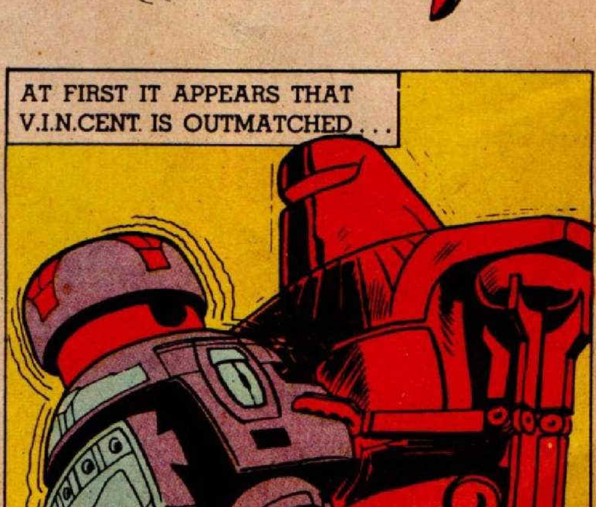

WITHOUT POWER, THE CYGNUS TUMBLES HELPLESSLY TOWARD THE BLACK HOLE - - CAUGHT BY THE INCREDIBLE GRAVITY . . .
MAXIMILLIAN! QUICK! PREPARE THE PROBE SHIP!
BUT AS THE GIANT ROBOT LEAVES THE CONTROL TOWER . . .
EEEEEEAAAGH!

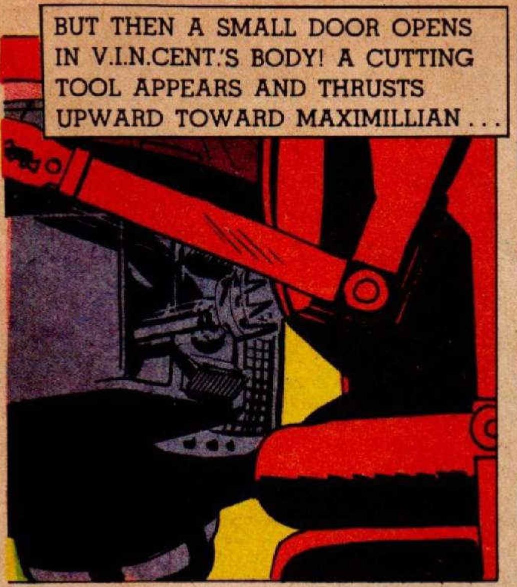

CRASH


HELP! You there! *HELP ME!* Listen! Please listen! *SOMEBODY!*
BUT REINHARDT'S SURGEONS HAVE DONE THEIR WORK TOO WELL! THE HUMANOIDS CAN ATTEND ONLY TO THEIR TASKS, AND THERE IS NO ONE TO ANSWER REINHARDT'S CRIES FOR HELP . . .

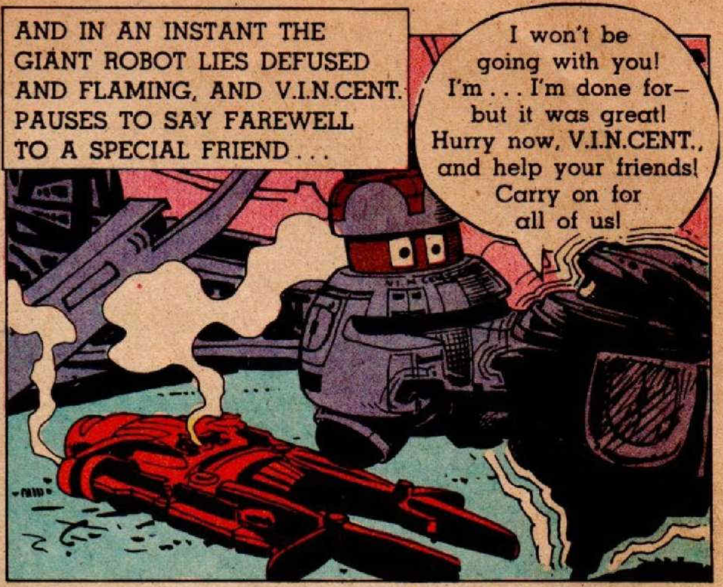

THE CYGNUS IS BREAKING UP AS THE PALOMINO CREW RACE TOWARD THE PROBE SHIP. THEY HAVE ALMOST REACHED THEIR GOAL WHEN . . .
ZZZZPT!
MAXIMILLIAN!


Get to the ship! I'll handle this!
BUZZ!


AT FIRST IT APPEARS THAT V.I.N.CENT. IS OUTMATCHED . . .

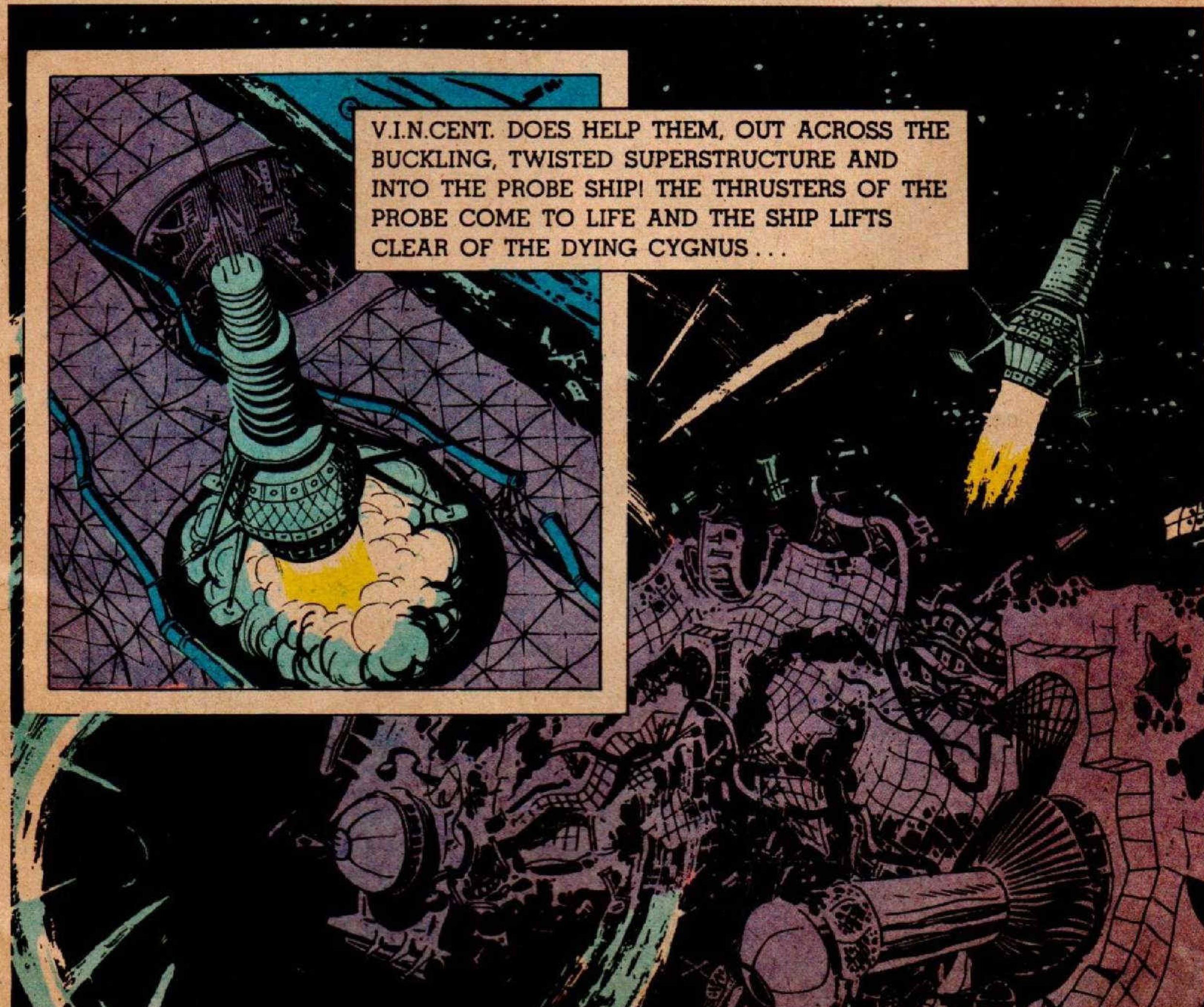


BUT THEN A SMALL DOOR OPENS IN V.I.N.CENT.'S BODY! A CUTTING TOOL APPEARS AND THRUSTS UPWARD TOWARD MAXIMILLIAN . . .

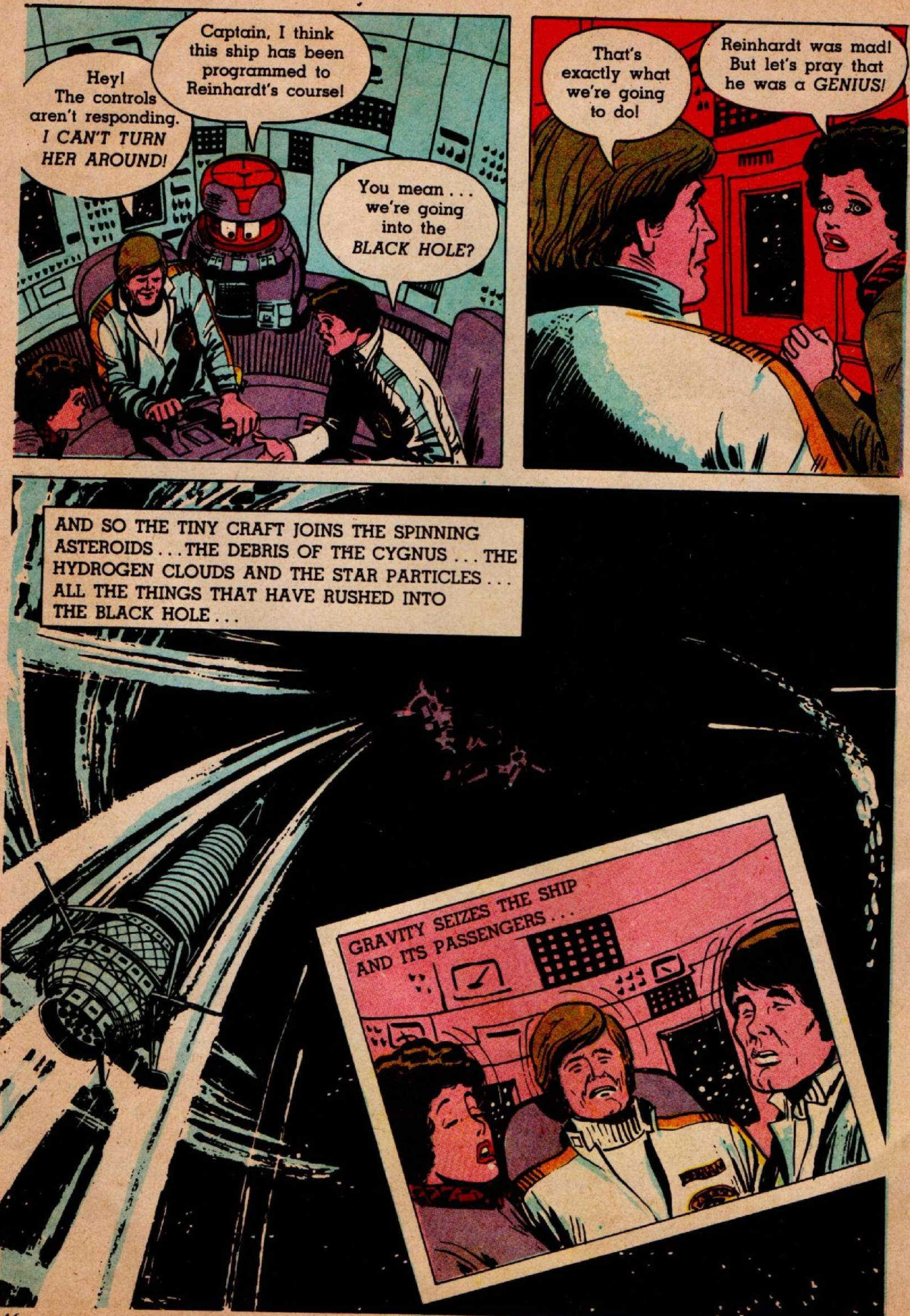


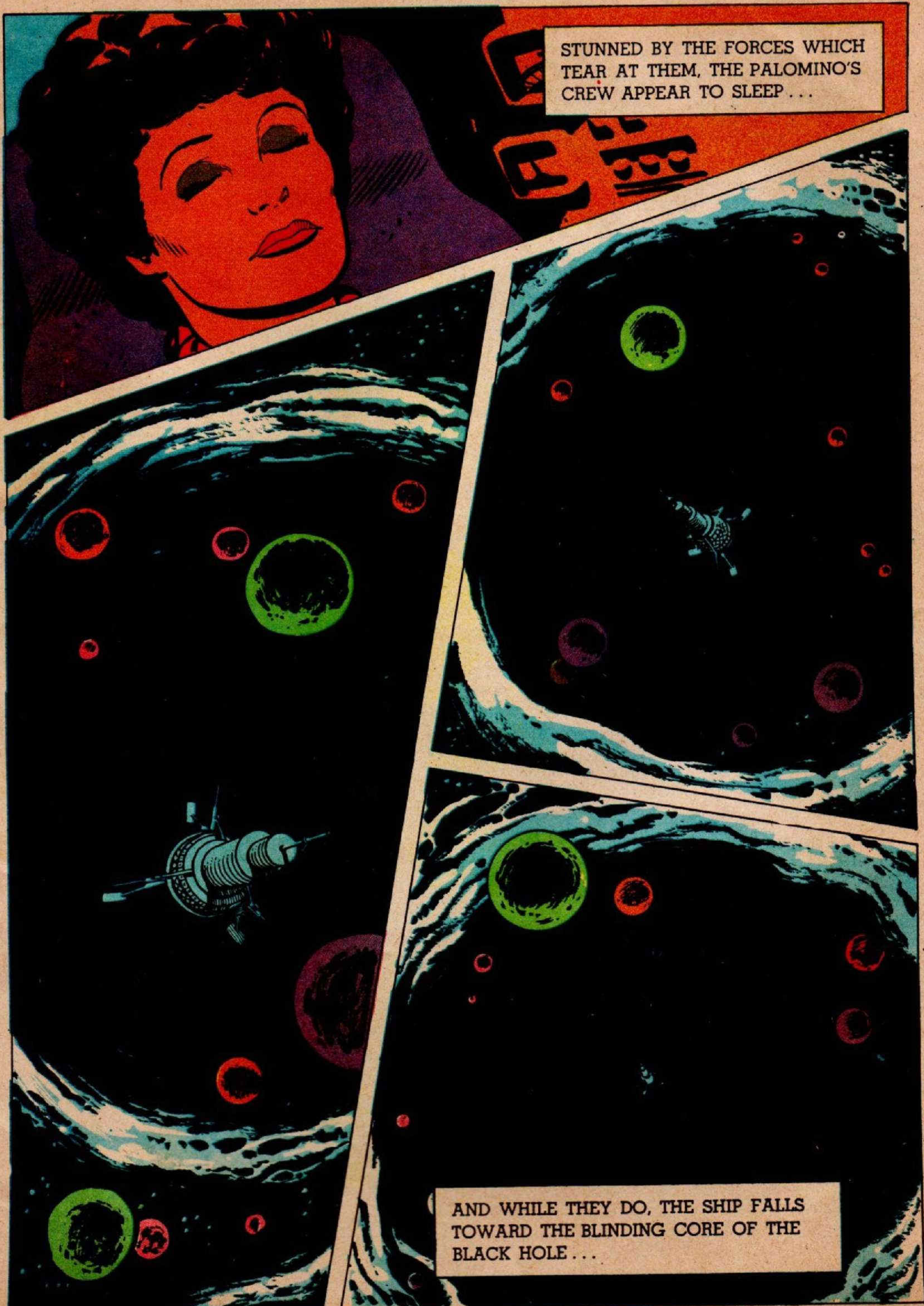
AND IN AN INSTANT THE GIANT ROBOT LIES DEFUSED AND FLAMING, AND V.I.N.CENT. PAUSES TO SAY FAREWELL TO A SPECIAL FRIEND . . .

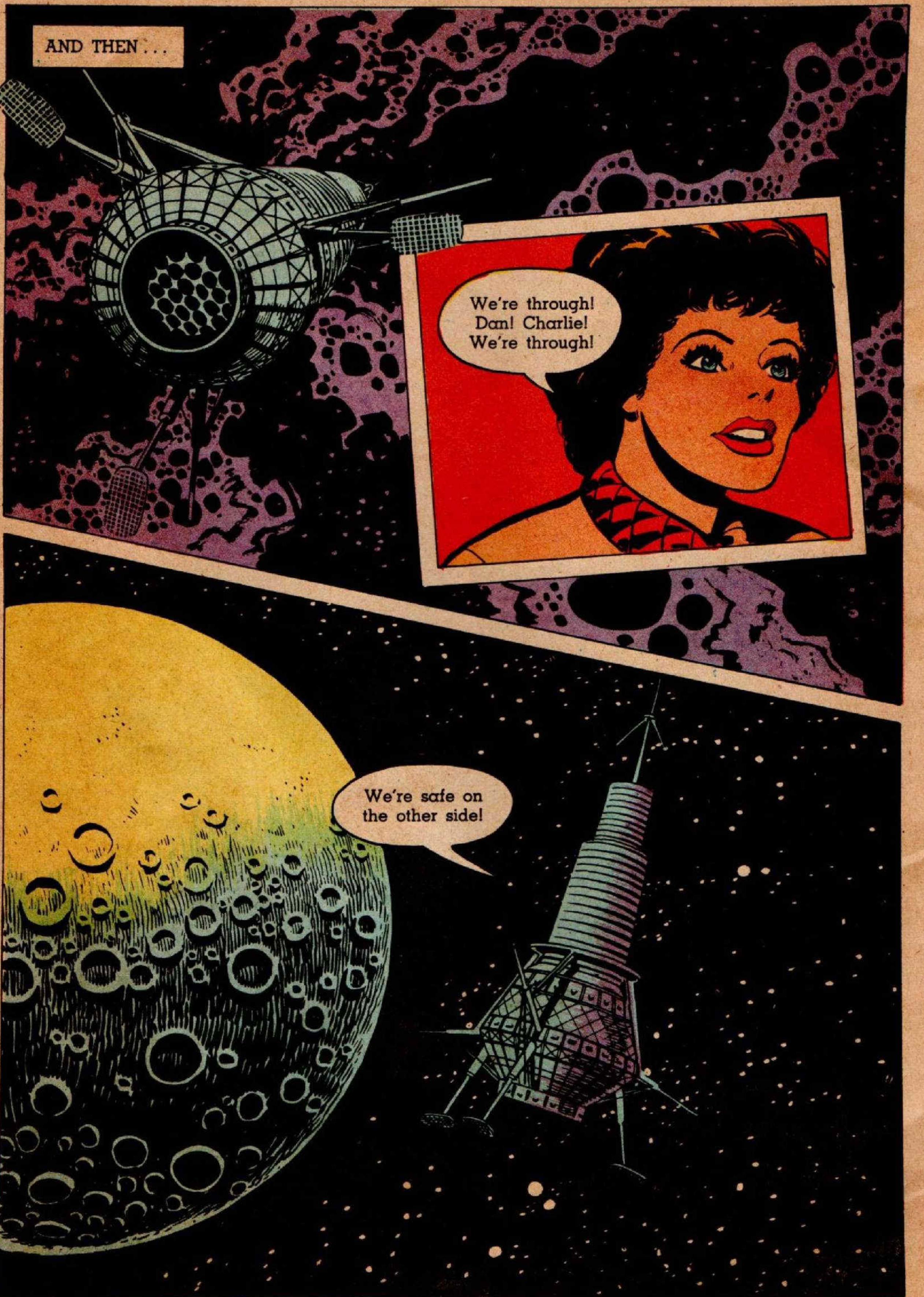
I won't be going with you! I'm . . . I'm done for— but it was great! Hurry now, V.I.N.CENT., and help your friends! Carry on for all of us!

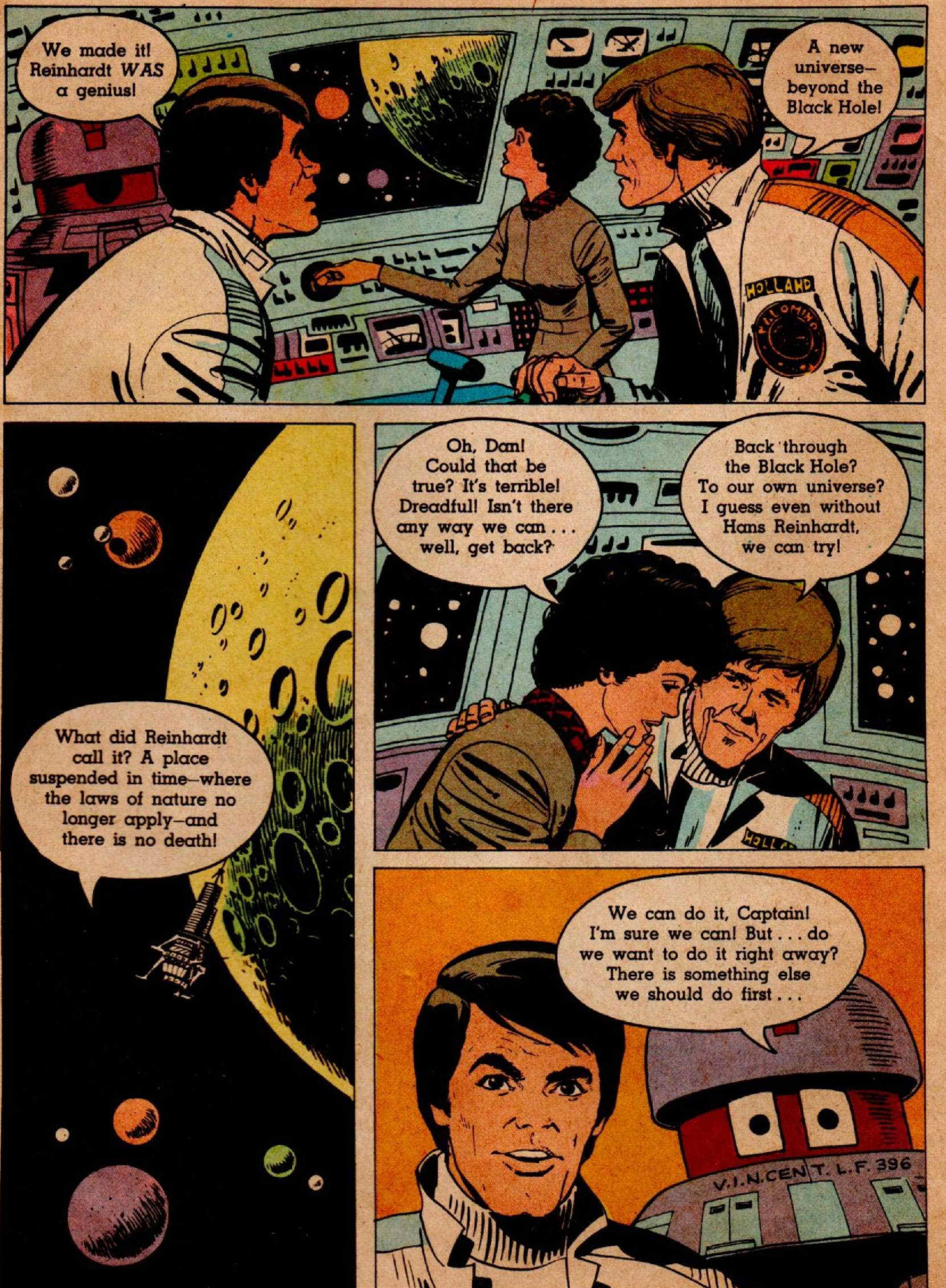


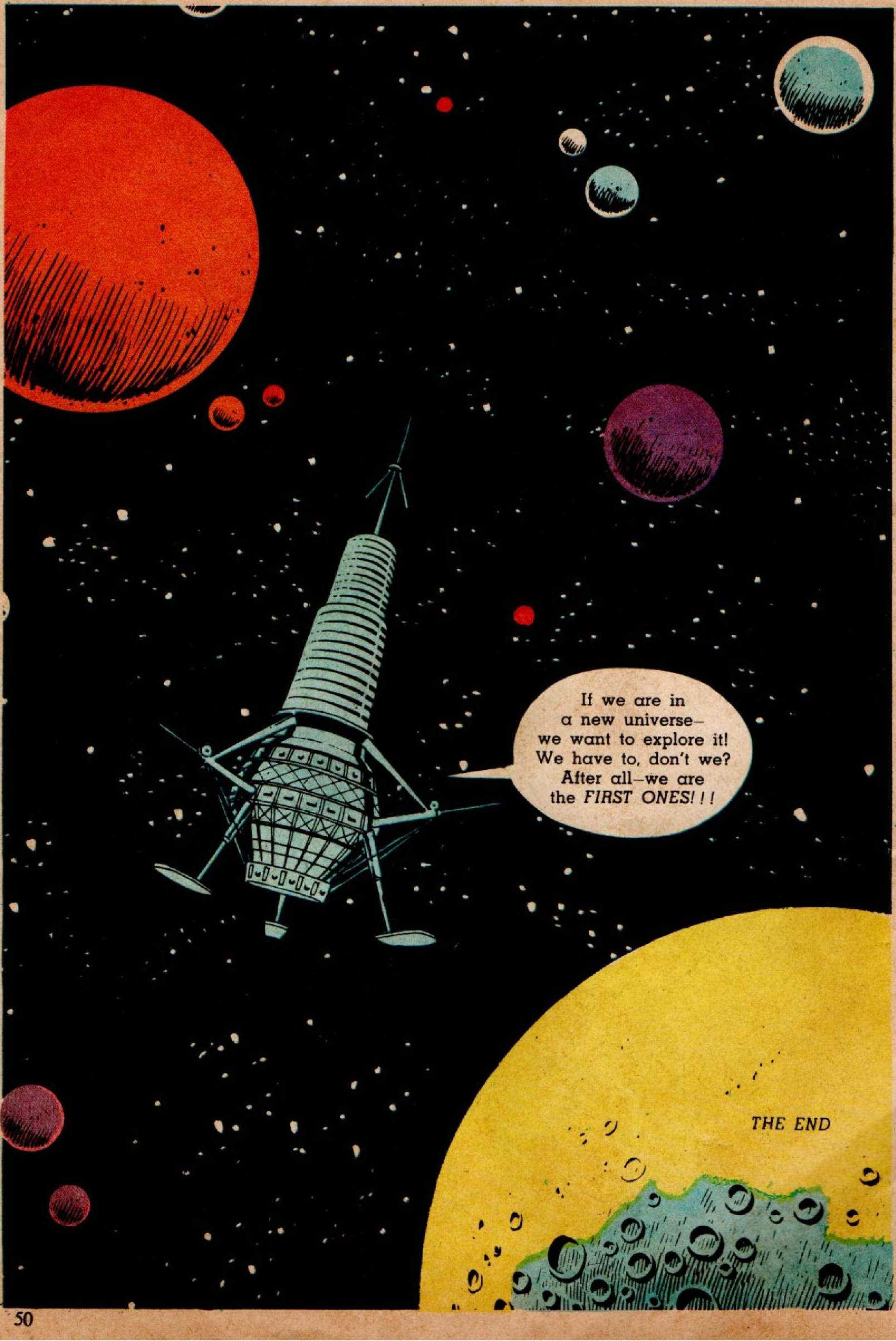
V.I.N.CENT. DOES HELP THEM, OUT ACROSS THE BUCKLING, TWISTED SUPERSTRUCTURE AND INTO THE PROBE SHIP! THE THRUSTERS OF THE PROBE COME TO LIFE AND THE SHIP LIFTS CLEAR OF THE DYING CYGNUS . . .


Hey! The controls aren't responding. *I CAN'T TURN HER AROUND!*
Captain, I think this ship has been programmed to Reinhardt's course!
You mean . . . we're going into the *BLACK HOLE?*
That's exactly what we're going to do!
Reinhardt was mad! But let's pray that he was a *GENIUS!*
AND SO THE TINY CRAFT JOINS THE SPINNING ASTEROIDS . . . THE DEBRIS OF THE CYGNUS . . . THE HYDROGEN CLOUDS AND THE STAR PARTICLES . . . ALL THE THINGS THAT HAVE RUSHED INTO THE BLACK HOLE . . .
GRAVITY SEIZES THE SHIP AND ITS PASSENGERS . . .


STUNNED BY THE FORCES WHICH TEAR AT THEM, THE PALOMINO'S CREW APPEAR TO SLEEP . . .
AND WHILE THEY DO, THE SHIP FALLS TOWARD THE BLINDING CORE OF THE BLACK HOLE . . .


AND THEN . . .
We're through! Dan! Charlie! We're through!
We're safe on the other side!


We made it! Reinhardt *WAS* a genius!
A new universe— beyond the Black Hole!
HOLLAND
What did Reinhardt call it? A place suspended in time—where the laws of nature no longer apply—and there is no death!
Oh, Dan! Could that be true? It's terrible! Dreadful! Isn't there any way we can . . . well, get back?
Back through the Black Hole? To our own universe? I guess even without Hans Reinhardt, we can try!
We can do it, Captain! I'm sure we can! But . . . do we want to do it right away? There is something else we should do first . . .
V.I.N.CENT. L.F. 396


If we are in
a new universe–
we want to explore it!
We have to, don't we?
After all–we are
the *FIRST ONES!!!*
THE END

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